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PLAY METER

MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE COIN-OPERATED ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

VOL. 13, NO. 1 CONTENTS JANUARY, 1987

FEATURES

Exploring the crane explosion **11**

Though cranes and merchandisers are not new concepts, the new technology equipment is making a gigantic impact on the coin-op industry. There are now over 20 companies offering these machines. This article explores the reasons for crane and merchandiser popularity.

Stuffing a crane so it doesn't become a turkey **26**

You've purchased a crane. Now, it's time to decide what to put in it. What's available? What are the most popular items? What should you consider before making the investment? Here are some useful tips and information to help you answer those important questions you must ask so you make the right choice. At the end of the story there is a listing of companies offering the stuffing for your crane.

Evaluating a crane for purchase **31**

With so many companies offering cranes and merchandisers, making a choice can be difficult. This article will offer suggestions on how to compare equipment so what you buy is what you hoped to get. There is a chart included so you can see at a glance the advantages and disadvantages of each brand.

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Cover: Play Meter is the perfect choice for coin-op readers as indicated by our cover, designed by Leslie Lally. Leslie is the 10-year-old daughter of publisher Carol Lally and the late Ralph Lally, founder of the magazine. A student in the fifth grade, Leslie won two local art contests in 1986; one for New Orleans area Girl Scouts and another seasonal contest at Halloween in which her drawing was selected from over 3,000 entries.

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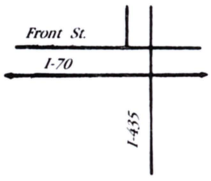

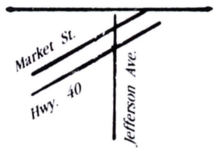

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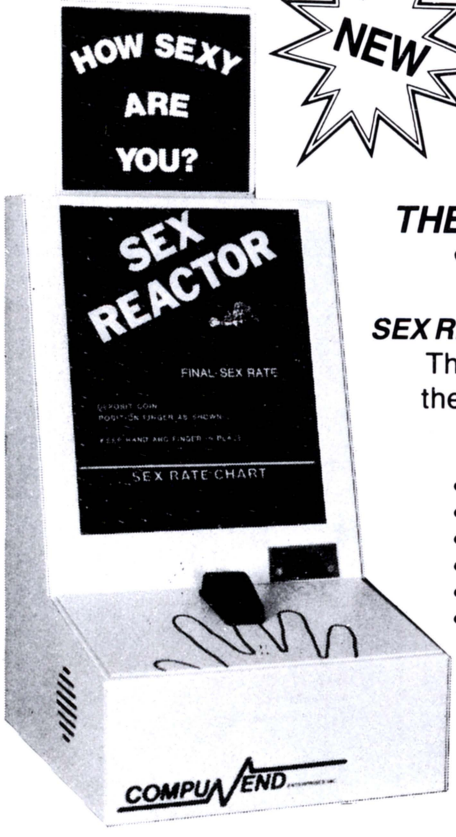

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PLAY METER, January, 1987. Volume 13, No. 1. Copyright 1987 by Skybird Publishing Company. **PLAY METER** (ISSN 0162-1343) (USPS 358-350) is published once monthly on the 15th of the month. Publishing office: 6600 Fleur De Lis, New Orleans, LA 70124; **MAILING ADDRESS:** P.O. Box 24170, New Orleans, LA 70184, U.S.A.; phone: 504/488-7003. For Subscriptions: 504/488-7003. Subscription rates: U.S. and Canada--$50. Advertising rates are available on request. **NO PART OF THIS MAGAZINE MAY BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT EXPRESS PERMISSION.** The editors are not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts. **PLAY METER** buys **ALL RIGHTS**, unless otherwise specified, to accepted manuscripts, cartoons, art work, and photographs. Second-class postage paid at New Orleans, LA 70113 and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send Form 3579 to PLAY METER, P.O. Box 24170, New Orleans, LA 70184.

Up Front

DIGGING INTO CRANES

According to Chinese astrology, 1987 will be the Year of the Cat. According to coin-op soothsayers, 1987 will be the Year of the Crane. In fact, the 80's may be a whole decade of cranes. From a production standpoint alone, with 24 companies turning out USA-made or imported cranes, this product line represents a large portion of game equipment on the street. Cranes are a force to be reckoned with.

There's no mystery to the appeal of cranes. First, they are proven money makers. Let's face it, we're all in this business to turn a decent profit. Any equipment that has "legs", and cranes fit that description, is worthy of operator attention.

Clearly, operators have diversified over the last two years, which brings us to point number two. Cranes fit in neatly with this diversification. The equipment is not dated; it's as fresh as the prizes inside, as has been stated many times over. No one can pass colorful, well-lighted and well-dressed cranes without taking a second look. It's difficult not to like cranes.

Plus, cranes and rotary merchandisers are available in a variety of sizes and cabinet styles from countertop to super singles on up to the giant six-player--one to fit every pocketbook. Cranes go in any type of location, from arcades to street spots like truck stops and c-stores. The ranks of prize suppliers have grown rapidly to accommodate the enlarged crane market, making a wide variety of prizes readily available.

Lastly, and importantly, cranes appeal to all age levels and will continue to do so. From young to old, and all stages in between, the child in each of us cannot resist cuddly stuffed animals or an opportunity to win a prize for our loved ones. Women, and the over-30 crowd, which can be hard to capture, openly enjoy cranes.

The only stumbling block in the path of more crane success is overcoming the hurdle of local laws that restrict crane operation because of misconceptions about cranes--confusing modern day skill versions with non-skill models of 40 or 50 years ago. Operators determined to add cranes should pursue proving the skill aspects of cranes in their local courts and band together with other operators and their state associations.

Although there are more than enough cranes on the market, there will probably be a few more companies jumping on the bandwagon. Once the legal issues are cleared, state by state and county by county, cranes will be a part of more operators' inventories. Cranes are here to stay--a new, reliable source of income. Vigilant policing of one's own operation will mean trust from the playing public and more profits.

After watching cranes over the past year, I offer the following guidelines:

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF CRANE OPERATION

1. THOU SHALT GIVE the player a good return (25-35 percent payout) for his patronage.

2. THOU SHALT RETURN to locations frequently to restock prizes--it's worth the effort.

3. THOU SHALT CHANGE the variety of prizes to ensure continued customer happiness.

4. THOU SHALT USE only prizes that fit through the prize chute and prize door.

5. THOU SHALT NOT not get carried away with "flash" and wrap money around plush prizes.

6. THOU SHALT NOT tie down prizes.

7. THOU SHALT NOT let "hard goods" drop below plush and be lost to the player.

8. THOU SHALT HAVE fun with cranes, using imaginative prizes to generate more player interest.

9. THOU SHALT POLICE thyself, knowing that satisfied crane players mean more money in thy pockets.

10.THOU SHALT NOT underestimate the crane player.

Bonnie Theard

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

2nd Annual ACME 87

AMERICAN COIN MACHINE EXPOSITION

The festivities begin when the American Coin Machine Exposition returns for a command performance on Friday, March 20, Saturday, March 21 and Sunday, March 22, 1987, at the Rivergate in New Orleans.

ACME 87 is a parade of leading manufacturers of coin-operated equipment and accessories displaying a myriad of products as mighty as the Mississippi.

ACME 87 echoes the sound of operators, distributors, technicians and other coin-operated professionals making their play for the products that will set the pace for the marketplace in the coming year.

ACME 87 is educational sessions featuring topics and speakers as bold and brassy as Bourbon St. Blues.

ACME 87 is the magic and mystery of Mardi Gras at the grandest ball of them all—the Amusement Machine Charitable Foundation's Banquet, on Friday, March 20 at the Sheraton New Orleans.

ACME 87 is sippin' a Sazerac on a riverboat cruise or finding out what's cookin' with the great chefs of New Orleans at one of the specially planned spouse programs for friends and families of ACME '87 attendees.

ACME 87 is as unique and diverse as the Crescent City itself. The ACME experience is the total coin-operated experience. ACME is a trade show called "Desire."

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NEWS

ARACHNID TO TAKE PART IN TWO TOURNAMENTS IN '87

Arachnid has announced that it will participate in the 1987 Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association Illinois State Championship of English Mark Darts by providing a format for the qualifying tournaments and by running the finals, for which it will supply all the dart games. This is the third year Arachnid has taken part in the association's tournament. The Rockford, Ill., company will also provide the championship trophies and part of the more than $11,000 in cash prizes.

A consolation bracket for two events was also added to this year's finals: the "Sunday Second Chance Tournie," which will be open to those who have been eliminated from Saturday's main events.

The finals are scheduled for April 4 and 5, at the Civic Center Exhibition Hall in Peoria.

Arachnid is also sponsoring the $50,000 Bullshooter II National Grand Tour, in which five $5,000 regional tournaments will culminate in a $25,000 national championship to be held at the Rosemont Ramada Inn in Chicago, May 23-25 of this year.

All of the regional tournaments are open tournaments in which players from designated regions may enter for $10 per person per event. All of the main events are double elimination.

In addition to the cash prizes awarded at the regional levels, free entry certificates for the May finals will be given to the first-, second-, and third-place finishers of each main event. Operators will be able to enter local league players in the finals just as they did in last year's Bullshooter National Challenge.

Three of the five regional

Open doubles winners, Jim Dickison and Dave Schultz

A Bullshootin' crowd at the midwest regional

Members of the board of directors and staffs of AAMA and JAMMA and members pose following a joint meeting of the two boars during the JAMMA show in October. AAMA president Maury Ferchen and JAMMA chairman Masaya Nakamura are seated in the center.

tournaments have already taken place. The first of the tournaments--the Midwest Regional Open, held in Des Moines, Iowa--drew 445 contestants from Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Nebraska, Iowa, and Kansas. The second and third tournaments were held in December (Roanoke, Va.) and January (Portland, Ore.). The Western regional is scheduled for February 21 and 22, in San Jose, Calif., and the fifth of the five will take place on March 14 and 15, in Buffalo, N.Y.

DART NEWSLETTER DEBUTS

Throw Lines, the AMOA National Dart Association's newsletter, had its debut in November, at the AMOA in Chicago. The premier issue came off the press as a four-pager that carried national news as well as league news from across the country. Published by *National Billiard News* (P.O. Box 807, Northville, MI 48167), *Throw Lines* welcomes unsolicited articles and photos and accepts advertising. It hopes to become the principal communications vehicle for news and information on darts and league activities nationwide.

NEW AMOA DIRECT LINE

AMOA has a new direct line telephone number for members' convenience in contacting headquarters. The number is 312/565-4602, and is answered by AMOA staffers. However, AMOA encourages those who are calling a specific staff member to continue to use the 312/644-6610 number.

UPDATE ON CRANES IN OHIO

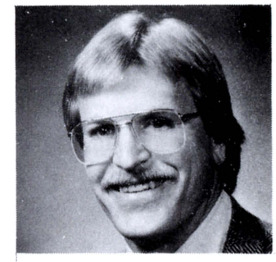
Keeping Attuned, the Ohio Coin Machine Association's newsletter, reports that Assistant Attorney General Nathan Gordon, in responding to OCMA's request for clarification on the legality of cranes in Ohio, wrote: "It is my unofficial opinion that the crane game is considered a game of skill rather than a game of chance since the outcome is not determined largely or wholly by chance."

KIDDE BUYS IDEA

KIDDE Inc. has completed the purchase of the assets of Industrial Design Electronics Associates, Inc. (IDEA), of Sycamore, Ill. Now the electronic division of The Valley Company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Kidde Recreation Products Group, the Sycamore facility will direct its efforts toward the development and manufacture of coin-operated games and other products to be marketed through Valley's Bay City, Mich., office. Current products include *Cougar* and *Royal Dartes* Electronic Dart Games, Home Electronic Dart games, and *Idea Ball.*

Donald P. DeVale, founder and former president of IDEA, has joined The Valley Company as vice-president of engineering and general manager of the Sycamore, Ill., division.

VALLEY NAMES SERVICE MANAGER



Dan Meeker

Dan Meeker has been appointed national service manager of The Valley Company. The announcement was made by Alan Schafer, vice-president of marketing.

Before joining Valley, Meeker was the service manager for Inacomp Computer Center in Saginaw, Mich. "With the introduction of our new electronic dart games," a press release said, "we are delighted to have a man with his background on our marketing team."

AMOA STANDARDIZATION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS SIXTH STANDARD

The AMOA industry standardization committee has added a sixth recommendation to its list of standards for parts and components for the coin-operated industry. The recommendation reads: "All games shall have a handle or handlegrip adequate for easy loading of the

game onto a two-wheel dolly."

Earlier recommendations include the use of a standard 7/8-inch barrel for all coin- and cash-door locks, coin mechanisms that either accept or reject Canadian coins, and a standardized bookkeeping procedure for pinball machines.

The committee recently updated two other recommendations. It allowed exceptions to the standard that calls for power switches to be located on the upper lefthand section of the cabinet by adding the phrase "except when prohibited by regulatory requirements," and it changed the wording of the standard pertaining to location of the volume control so that it reads "...]shall be located[inside the front door easily accessible, or prominently marked."

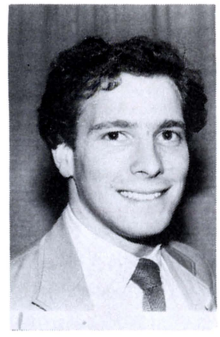
KRAKAUER NEW NAMA CHIEF

Merrill Krakauer, chairman of the board of Rowe International Inc., has been elected chairman of the board of directors of the National Automatic Merchandising Association. He succeeds James A. Rost, executive vice-president of Canteen Corp., of Chicago.

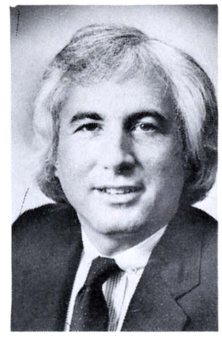
Other new NAMA officers for 1987 include Senior Vice Chairman William K. Walsh, of Continental Vending Company (Orange, Calif.); Vice Chairman John R. Farquharson, of ARASERVE (Philadelphia); and Treasurer Harold I. Blotner, of Dane County Vending Company (Madison, Wisc.).

DATA EAST PINBALL, INC., ASSEMBLING TEAM

Data East Pinball, Inc., the new design-and-assembly subsidiary of Data East U.S.A., is building what appears to be a solid design group for its Chicago-based facility. Gary Stern, director of Video Vendor and son of Sam Stern, has been appointed vice-president and general manager. He heads a staff that includes designer Joe Kaminkow, who is known for his



Joe Kaninkow



Gary Stern

work on games such as *Defender*, and mechanical engineer Claude Fernandez, who has worked for Atari, Williams, Bally, WICO, and Grand Products.

DULEY APPOINTED V-P OF MARKETING AT INTERMARK

Intermark Gaming International, Inc., has named Daniel W. Duley vice-president of marketing. Duley comes to Intermark from Status Game Corporation, where, as vice-president of sales and marketing, he handled sales and product development in both domestic and foreign markets. Before Status, Duley held positions with Playtime Distributing Company, a manufacturer of reel-type slot machines, and with Interscience Systems, Inc.

PHILIP MORRIS PROMOTES MOWRER AND GLENN

Hans G. Storr, the chief financial officer for Philip Morris Companies Inc., has announced the appointment of John F. Mowrer III and James L. Glenn.

Mowrer has been promoted to the position of assistant controller, financial planning and analysis. Mowrer, who joined Philip Morris in 1974 as a plant accountant, served as manager, and later director, of business planning and analysis from 1981 to 1984, when he was named director of forecasting and analysis and special projects. He held that position until now.

Glenn, formerly assistant director of forecasting and analysis, will fill the post vacated by Mowrer. Glenn came to philip Morris in 1977 from Hershey Foods Corporation, where he was a financial accountant.

MULLANE AND TRUMP NAMED NEWSMAKERS OF 1986'

Embattled Bally Manufacturing Corporation chairman Robert E. Mullane and New York real estate and casino tycoon Donald Trump have been named "Newsmakers of 1986" by *Gaming & Wagering Business* magazine in the New York-based publication's annual year-end issue.

Both men figured prominently in casino industry headlines last year, when Trump mounted takeover attempts against both Holiday Corporation and Bally, even as Mullane was expanding the Bally casino empire with the acquisition of the former MGM Grand casino-hotels in Nevada.

IVY AT SEGA

Howell Ivy, formerly with Exidy Corporation and in the business for well over 10 years, has marked his sixth month as senior vice-president of operations at Sega. Ivy, who joined Sega in July, is responsible for all U.S. manufacturing of Sega product, which includes the AMOA hit, *Outrun.*

Howell Ivy

PAY PHONES NEWS

Independent Coin Payphone Association (Illinois) recently announced the activation of a new group insurance plan. According to the ICPA newsletter, the new program provides fire-, theft-, and extended-coverage insurance that includes damage by wind, civil commotions, smoke, hail, aircraft, vehicles, inherent explosion, and riot.

Premium rates for independent payphone telephone operators, the newsletter says, will be "very competitive, with annual rates quoted at $16 per outside telephone and $7.25 per inside telephone.

AT&T has unveiled plans to conduct a trial of compensation packages for 0+ and 0- traffic with the private pay phone industry. The trial, which got underway in December and will end no later than April 30, includes more than 30 private pay phone companies and covers a variety of locations.

AT&T is offering two separate commission plans, the first based on a percentage of total AT&T revenue, the second based on a per-message fee.

GTE Supply of Salt Lake City has introduced a new private pay phone and has created a group to market the units to the customer-owned coin-operated telephone market. The GTE 1220 pay phone combines the company's 120B housing with a newly designed "smart" card and features digital voice detection, call accounting, remote polling/diagnostics, a real-time clock, speed dialing, and the availability of operator assistance.

The GTE 1200 is manufactured in the United States and is available for delivery.

GAMEMASTERS HAS NEW ADDRESS

Gamemasters, the company formed by Digital Controlsfounder Mike Macke, has moved into new facilities. Macke, last year resigned his post as president of Digital Controls, formed by Macke and Mike Pace in the mid-seventies. The company filed bankruptcy a short time later and shut down.

Macke formed Gamemasters with several Digital employees to develop and manufacture a rotary merchandiser called *Spin Out.*

Macke told Play Meter that *Spin* Out is now being shipped as fast as the company can make them. "The collections on these machines are fantastic," Macke said.

In a hint of dejavu Macke's new Gamesmasters has the same address as his old company because Macke rented space in the old Digital Controls building. The address and phone number are: 5555 Oakbrook, Suite 240, Norcross, GA 30093. Phone: (404)662-5666.

COURT UPHOLDS VENDING COMPANY IN CONTRACT DISPUTE

The Michigan Court of Appeals unanimously ruled that two vending companies are entitled to recoup more that $60,000 from a bar owner and a competitor for violating an exclusive location contract, for damage to their equipment and for repayment of an unearned advance commission.

At the same time, however, the three-judge Appeals Court panel ruled that Cadillac Vending Company and Union Music Company, Inc., cannot collect an additional $20,000 in punitive damages from the owner of the now-defunct Blue Whale Saloon and from North American Interstate, Inc. The decision came Dec. 1, more than 10 years after the breach-of-contract lawsuit was filed.

Beginning in 1973, Union Music provided juke boxes, pool tables and pinball machines to the Blue Whale Saloon in clinton Township, a Detroit suburb. A second firm, Cadillac Vending, owned by the same man, placed cigarette machines in the bar. Under their agreements, Blue Whale owner Morris L. Haynes received 50 percent of the revenue generated by Union Music's equipment and a nine-cent commission on each package of cigarettes sold from Cadillac Vending's machines. As Haynes received periodic advances against commissions, he signed documents giving the two companies exclusive rights to use his bar for a four-year period.

The latest of those agreements was signed in November 1975 when Haynes received a $3,000 advance.

But in March 1976, Haynes was approached by a North American Interstate sales representative to discuss purchasing his own equipment. Haynes then bought two pool tables and a jukebox under a lease with option to buy and bought two cigarette machines on an installment sales basis, from North American Interstate.

When the new equipment arrived, all the other equipment, except pinball machines, was returned to Union Music and Cadillac Vending, and Haynes sent them a check for the $1,800 that remained unpaid from the latest advance. The check was never cashed, and Union Music removed its pinball machines from the Blue Whale Saloon.

A lawsuit was filed accusing Haynes of breach of contract and accusing North American Interstate of tortuous interference with a contract. Cadillac Vending and Union Music also sought to recover the unearned advance and the cost of repairing their damaged equipment.

After a non-jury trial, 41B District Judge William H. Cannon awarded the two companies $46,000 in compensatory damages plus $14,510 interest, as well as $1,800 plus $565 interest to cover the unearned advance commissions. Cannon also ordered Haynes and North American Interstate to pay $20,000 plus $3,095 interest in punitive or "exemplary" damages.

On appeal, Haynes and North American Interstate challenged Cannon's decision. In part, they contended that the judge's award was too high and was unsubstantiated by the evidence, and that there was no legal basis to grant punitive damages in such a dispute. They also argued that the trial judge failed to consider that the Blue Whale went out of business after a 1978 fire, that Cadillac Vending and Union Music refused to fully disclose financial records and tax returns to verify their claimed losses, and that Union Music

EXPLORING THE CRANE EXPLOSION

BY BONNIE THEARD

No one in this industry could miss the veritable explosion of crane and rotary merchandisers that have inundated the coin-op industry over the last year. Only a handful of manufacturers exhibited the equipment at ACME '86 in March. Then, at AMOA Expo '86 in November there were 19 companies represented! What happened to turn cranes into such a hot item?

Jeff Smart of Smart Industries in Des Moines, Iowa credits the crane explosion to several factors, and said, "For one, we were getting out of a video depression. Video game grosses dropped off considerably. The public had reached a saturation point. Then a machine (cranes) came out that was giving something to the player for his quarter. Winning a prize has always been a great thing on the fairgrounds. When you give something to the public, the gross is unbelievable."

Players crowd around Betson's *Fantasy Island* rotary unit.

Smart Industries manufactures the *Clean Sweep* crane in single, super single, double, and triple models; also the *Diamond Mine* four- player rotary.

"In the 13 years that I've been an operator, I've never come across a machine that comes close to grossing what a crane does," added Smart. "A triple crane at a truck stop takes in $2,000-$3,000 a week. A double unit at a roller skating rink or bowling alley takes in $1,200 or $1,500 a week. Super singles or singles at groceries and c-stores take in $800-$1,100 a week."

Smart knows the fairgrounds well after being in the traveling arcade business with his dad, Gordon Smart, and operating a street route business in Des Moines. "Being an operator," said Smart, "we could see the options that would be needed on cranes and we've provided those options in our machines."

Cranes appeal to men and women over the age of 30. "That's a very hard group to

tap," noted Smart. "The last time I can remember women playing a game is *Pac-Man.*"

Art Warner of Betson Enterprises in Moonachie, N.J. has been at the forefront of crane promotion and designing redemption equipment for eight years. Few may remember, but at the 1984 AMOA Expo Warner spoke on a panel discussing games of the future.

Said Warner, "I believed that these games-this form of entertainment-was the next wave for our industry to enjoy. I was talking to deaf ears then. But we were persistent, along with some of our competition, in driving this message home. The time was right, game rooms were down, many operators and some distributors failed. The natural step was to go into a merchandising machine. "Merchandisers are great pieces for unattended locations, and ideal for all game rooms. First, we went to amusement parks across the country. If it works in Jersey, it should work all over."

A technician checks the *Diamond Mine* rotary from Smart Industries.

Betson is famous for its *Big Choice* crane, the only Belgium crane. "The manufacturer we deal with has been manufacturing cranes for 40 years," said Warner. "Most of the cranes out today are a derivative of the Belgium crane. The quality is built-in. It's overbuilt by American standards for what is considered an amusement device. Operators should be able to operate their cranes for 10 to 12 years with some imagination."

Crane popularity led SMS Manufacturing Company to enter the market. According to Jim Pietrangelo of SMS, "We're always looking to diversify our product line, but we are very careful what we add--only products that have a decent lifetime. Cranes seem to fit the bill."

Gordon Smart, closest to crane, explains features of the *Clean Sweep.*

Options and payout

Options help to keep machines grossing the maximum amount of dollars. "The dollar bill acceptor is an important option since many locations don't want to be bothered giving change," said Smart. To keep inventory control, look for another option--a prize counter inventory control unit. A siren or bubble light on top of a machine attracts other customers. Smart is proud of his bonus feature that allows the customer one play for 25 cents and five plays for $1 or four quarters.

Smart Industries' *Clean Sweep* offers other control options: B, B+ and C, with all three programs on a timer for 10, 15, 20, or 25 second settings. In all three the player controls the claw forward and backward, left and right. Option B is the most liberal setting; option C the most conservative. The B+ and C options account for most orders.

"In game C," notes Smart, "the player has the feeling of more skill because he has that last second of control until the claw closes. That's what gets repeat coins." He believes in keeping play as simple as possible and advocates joystick controls since customers are already familiar with them.

"I'm a firm believer in giving out at least 30 percent of the merchandise," he added. "When you're grossing those dollars you can afford to give away more and make your customers happy. It will make that location continue grossing that amount of money longer."

"You want to give out about a third and split the other 2/3 with the location," said Pietrangelo. "You have to keep people happy. Cranes require a lot more time than a normal video game. You're merchandising--not just hoping

people put quarters in. If you go to your locations and always work them, you're going to make a lot of money consistently every week."

A player tries UAI's *Treasure Island Gifts.*

Rotate Merchandise

To keep a machine lasting a long time on location, Smart stresses the importance of rotating merchandise. First plush, then hard goods--jewelry, calculators and the like. He suggests taking a double unit and stocking one side plush, one side hard goods. "Give the locations something different to look at. Stagger hard goods on plexiglass steps to rejuvenate grosses in a location." The stairsteps can hold 30-40 items. Other fresh ideas include five-by-nine inch posters, toy pistols that shoot nerf balls, dolls and piggy banks to mix in with plush.

Smart advises going back every other day to a fairly busy single machine. With double, triple or super single see it twice a week. Be sure to collect, clean, and fill.

"These machines have been in New Jersey 15-20 years," said Warner. "It's another form of retailing. The merchandise needs to be changed. Equate it to seeing the same suit in a store week after week. Suppliers are very much aware of that. Our crane units have the ability to pick up rings, watches, calculators, cameras, lighters, bracelets, T-shirts, all sorts of items. They are not limited to soft goods. Plush is convenient. The success story about cranes has been built around plush. Operators are not limited."

Locations

Any high traffic location is ripe for cranes. In addition to arcades, operators can consider other locations such as airports, turnpike rest areas, supermarkets, discount stores, home centers, bus and train stations.

Truck stops are one of the most popular locations. And don't forget c-stores.

Single models are versatile for many locations. The SMS *Skill Crane* is available only as a single. "We want to go right down the mainstream," said Pietrangelo, "and most of the orders are for singles. I feel the majority of the market is in singles. A double is locked into one part of a game room. You can have the effect of a double unit, if you have the space, by putting two singles together. Then, if you decide to change, or even lose a location, each single can function in another spot on its own."

Thorny Legality

Why aren't cranes in everyone's inventory? For one, street operators have not had to handle merchandise before. And, of course, there's the thorny legal question.

Smart suggests operators first check with the local authority in their town before purchasing equipment. Cranes are legal, depending on local standards. Operators must find a machine that suits regulations for their area. They also want to find a company with a good maintenance record, one that will help the operator set up and maintain equipment properly. Look for a company that will be around for several years.

As far as legality is concerned, Warner feels that "the way the equipment is being designed today, in 80 percent of states where it's been challenged in court, the court holds it is a legal game. The right way to do it is to ask law enforcement first. If the answer is that the games are considered illegal, go to the state association with other operators and in effect challenge it through the courts."

Rotary vs. Crane

According to Smart, "Locations are limited for rotary merchandisers. Operators really need a center spot. A four- player rotary can gross the same as a triple player crane--depending on location. It's not an entrance piece like a crane can be. If you have the space for it in a bowling alley or arcade room you can use it, but it does take up more square feet."

Betson has designed a new single player rotary, the *Mini Twirl*, with an overall size of 30 inches in width,

which should open up locations not previously considering a rotary.

A number of countertop units also are available for bar locations or any other spot where space is at a premium.

Safety

Since cranes feature a large glassed viewing area for drawing attention and seeing prizes, the question of safety arises. Betson's crane features one-quarter inch tempered plate glass. "We've sold in excess of a couple of thousand units and have never had a problem," stated Warner.

SMS uses plexiglas. "We selected plexiglass for wearability, strength and lightness," noted Pietrangelo. "It keeps the cost of shipping down and lessens the possibility of damage in shipping and on location."

Children and parents alike enjoy playing *Diga Mart* by Roth Novelty.

Button or joystick

The same results can be obtained with a four directional joystick or four buttons," said Warner. "Joysticks give players the impression that they have more control, but it's just an impression. The reason for the popularity at this point regarding joysticks is that the legal version skill crane has a joystick and authorities have accepted that."

Warner reminds that buttons also are familiar controls for customers. Consider that *Space Invaders* was a button game. "You're dealing with a single unit 24 inches in width--the joystick is a cleaner way of giving one control."

Warner feels the operator is better off with a two directional unit instead of four directional because he can control his percentages better. The more player control there is in a unit, the higher the percentage of payout will be. It's a skill game, and when players play better, it will award more prizes. If operators give out 40 percent they are wasting money. A good rule of thumb is 25-35 percent payout."

Betson offers both button and joystick controls, with 65-70 percent sold as button units. "What I see now," said Warner, "is a trend toward joysticks. Once again, that trend is because people think a joystick unit is legal. And that's not necessarily the case. The joystick doesn't make it legal. There are many other requirements for legality."

Crane outlook

According to Warner, "At this stage of the game we've made a dent. I don't think we're near saturation.

"Many companies selling cranes today may not be in existence tomorrow. Many of the companies are new. The operator must be careful in the selection of the product he buys. Cranes are as good to operate today as they will be in the future. There will be a leveling off process in nine months to a year, but cranes will be a staple in the business."

Betson has endeavored to educate operators by offering seminars through its distributor network for the technical and merchandising end of cranes. Neal Rosenberg, Wylie Irwin, and Walter Schumacher of the Betson N.J. headquarters completed 12 such seminars throughout the country in 1986 and already have 15 scheduled for 1987. These will continue to be offered as long as there is a demand.

It's hard to imagine there not being a demand for cranes and more details about them in 1987.

Women, a hard group to tap, are attracted to cranes, here playing the Grayhound *Skill Crane*.

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made a unilateral decision to remove its pinball machines from the bar.

In an opinion by Judges Myron H. Walhls, Robert B. Burns and Meyer Warshawsky, the Court of Appeals rejected arguments contesting the compensatory damages but ruled that punitive damages are not available in a commercial contract case. The court also noted that there was no evidence of malice or reckless disregard for the two companies' rights in a way that could justify the $20,000 punitive damage award.

BY ERIC FREEDMAN

MICHIGAN COURT OUTLAWS POKER MACHINES

The Michigan Supreme Court unanimously held that video draw poker machines are illegal gaming devices under state law if they can accumulate more that 15 free plays. The 7-0 ruling upholds the authority of the State Liquor Control Commission to seize such machines.

In an opinion by Chief Justice G. Mennen Williams, the Supreme Court reversed two lower courts that had sided with the owner of such a machine, Automatic Music and Vending Co. of Painesville, Ohio, and a private social club from which a video poker machine was confiscated in 1982. The seizure occurred after a Liquor Control Commission inspector visited Aerie No. 3677 of the Fraternal Order of Eagles in Sanford, Michigan, and won 54 free games. The lodge bartender declined the inspector's request to exchange the free plays for cash.

A hearing officer called the machine a game "partly of skill and partly of chance" and fined the Eagles lodge $250. Automatic Music and Vending Co. then intervened, winning rulings from a Circuit Court judge and a three-judge state Court of Appeals panel that the machines were not banned gaming devices. The Supreme Court reached the opposite conclusion Nov. 24.

In the Supreme Court opinion, Justice Williams said video draw poker machines contain the three necessary elements involved in gaming: a price or consideration, which is the money paid to play; chance, in the from of random distribution of cards; and a prize or reward, in the form of free games. Under a 1975 state law, machines are exempt from the prohibition if they cannot accumulate more that 15 free replays at one time, do not permanently record the number of free games awarded, and allow discharge of only one replay at a time, the court noted.

However, Justice Williams said, the video poker machine seized from the Eagles does not qualify under that exemption because it permits more that 15 free games, maintains a permanent record of free replays, and has a knock-off button that can discharge all the free games.

The high court also rejected constitutional arguments against the ban. On the question of whether the 15-replay limit is arbitrary and denies equal protection of the law, Justice Williams said, "The Legislature may reasonably believe that the larger the number of free replays available, the greater the incentive to make cash payoffs. As the existence of such payoffs may be difficult to prove, that the Legislature picked a particular number as the dividing line is a matter purely within its discretion."

In addition, the Supreme Court rebuffed the argument that the law is unconstitutionally vague. It found no clarity problem with the words "one replay" or "knock-off button."

The decision did not address one concern raised by the Court of Appeals, whether it is worthwhile for the Liquor Control Commission to devote its investigative resources to locating and confiscating such machines.

BY ERIC FREEDMAN

GLEZERMAN PASSES AWAY

Allan M. Glezerman, 57, a leader in the vending and amusement industries, and most recently a pioneering force in the new private payphone field, died on December 6 after a lengthy illness.

Glezerman was chairman of Cointel Corporation, the publicly-held parent company of two successful subsidiaries which he founded, Cointel Communications and General Amusement Corporation. Cointel Communications is a major payphone distributor and General Amusement is a large owner/operator of video games in movie theatres.

Glezerman was born in Cleveland where at 12 he convinced a department store to hire him as a shoe salesman, thus beginning his career in sales. He joined the Army, earned a bachelor's degree in accounting and then resumed his sales career.

In 1951 he began his first vending company selling new equipment and soon recognized a need for refurbished machines, so he started Northeastern Automatic Products. Glezerman's brother, Lester Garson joined him and Garson today owns Vendor's Exchange, the outgrowth of the two brothers' vending operation.

After expanding his business ventures into Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Texas, Glezerman decided to head west, moving to California in 1967. Though he left the vending field for a few years, by the early 1970's, Glezerman was looking for growth opportunities in the industry. In 1974 Glezerman founded one of the first companies to own and operate video games in restaurants and bars. As the market for locations became saturated, he foresaw a new market for the games in movie theatre lobbies. Soon Theatre Amusement, now General Amusement, was born.

Glezerman secured exclusive contracts with the nation's largest theatre chains to own and operate video games in their lobbies.

Early in 1984, he read an article about the impeding legalization of privately-owned pay telephones. Seeing payphones as another vending

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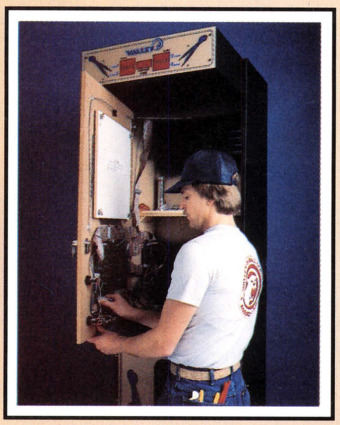

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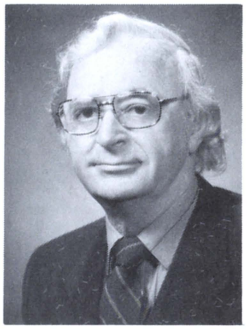
machine, Glezerman decided this new industry provided the growth opportunities that he was seeking for General Amusement and formed Cointel Communications to own and operate and sell payphones. He then took his company public, forming Cointel Corporation as the parent organization of both General Amusement and Cointel Communications.

Glezerman is survived by his wife of 35 years, Lois, daughters Gail (Sherman), Diane and Lauren and two grandchildren, Hallie and Eric Sherman. The family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to Variety Clubs International or Shaare Zedek Hospital in care of its Los Angeles office.

VALLEY NAMES GRIFFITHS

James Griffiths has been appointed director of International Operations for The Valley Company of Bay City, Mich., a subsidiary of Kidde, Inc.



James Griffiths

Griffiths, a 30-year veteran in international operations, has resided and managed business activities in the United States, Hong Kong, Australia, Thailand, Indonesia, West-Germany, United Kingdom and the Middle East. While in the United States he held the position of vice-president of International Marketing of the Brunswick Division of the Brunswick Corp.

"The addition of Griffiths to our executive staff is in keeping with Valley's on-going program to maintain its leadership in coin-operated games and the recreational industries," said Charles Milhem, president of Valley. "Griffiths' knowledge and experience will enable us to capitalize on the opportunities we visualize for our products overseas".

TELCO BECOMES GTE DISTRIBUTOR

Telco Corp. announced that it has become the first national distributor of all GTE telecommunications equipment for the pay telephone industry. GTE plans to establish itself as a major force in the two billion dollar pay telephone market by using Telco's marketing strategy.

The Telco has a nationwide vending network to sell payphones and related equipment in conjunction with an in-house leasing program. The leasing program, unique in the industry, enables customers to obtain financing for payphones and related equipment directly from Telco rather than dealing with outside leasing companies.

Telco will now have the added resources of the GTE Corporation backing its efforts in the vending and leasing of quality payphones. This guarantees that Telco can assure its customers nationwide distribution and service. The agreement with GTE names Telco as a national distributor for GTE Supply's new public telephone products group. Telco will have available to them every product that GTE manufactures applicable to the payphone market, including the recently unveiled GTE 1220 pay telephone. Telco is currently taking applications for its dealer network to market the GTE 1220 payphone.

For more information contact William Mears, chief operating officer, at (216)733-4000.

ATARI TO MARKET SEEBURG PHONOGRAPH IN EUROPE

Seeburg Corp. has given Atari Games Corporation the exclusive European marketing rights for its LaserMusic phonograph. Both parties are currently planning exclusive European manufacturing by Atari Games at its Ireland factory.

The sales responsibility will be one of the new functions of Shane Breaks, who will be leaving Atari's California headquarters to head up European sales with David Smith.

The Seeburg phonograph has received exceptional response in the U.S. since Seeburg began shipments in September, 1986.

Shane Breaks

European distribution will be handled through many of Atari's current video game distributorships. In other markets, Seeburg's established distributorships will continue to represent the line.

Ed Blankenbeckler

"Throughout my career, I have always had respect for Seeburg," remarked Breaks. "Since Seeburg's chairman, Ed Blankenbeckler, first announced the laser phonograph, I have been enthused about selling the line in Europe. Our Tipperary factory gives us a very strong ability to deliver the product at a competitive price."

NEWS

VIDEO LOTTERY MACHINES TO BE TESTED IN IOWA

The Iowa Lottery Commission is planning to begin a six-month test beginning in April to determine the profitability of video slot machines. Commissioner Ed Stanek said, "I don't like the term video slot machine because some of the machines resemble electronic games found in arcades." He said in an Omaha World-Herald article, that in one version the player manipulates a joystick to maneuver and fire images of darts at images of balloons floating across the screen. The balloons bear numbers that change periodically. The player tries to attain a pre-selected number total without exceeding it.

Stenek explained that the machines would dispense tickets to winners redeemable for additional games or cash.

The test is planned for bars and taverns only since anyone under 18 cannot legally play the Iowa state lottery. Stenek said it would be difficult for high traffic locations such as groceries and c-stores to maintain security on who plays the machines. Groceries and c-stores now make up about one-third of the Iowa Lottery's outlets but account for about two-thirds of lottery sales.

Video lottery machines were tested in Illinois two years ago, but were removed after the test was deemed a failure.

AAMA HIRES FOUR EX-FBI AGENTS

Four more ex-FBI employees have been hired by the American Amusement Machine Association to bolster the trade associations's attack against counterfeit and parallel video game boards being imported, distributed and operated in the United States. They join ex-FBI agent Bob Fay who was hired last year as the director of industry affairs and enforcement.

Tim Huhn, a 12-year FBI veteran residing in Atlanta, will serve as an investigator on the east coast. Larry Holdaway, a six-year FBI veteran will be assigned to the west coast. And Jim Roberts, a retired FBI agent with 20-plus years of service will be responsible for investigative activities in the mid-west. Fay stated that all three have extensive experience in white collar crime investigations and that Huhn and Holdaway have accounting backgrounds. Fay stated further that the newly hired employees will work on a part-time basis with AAMA and mainly handle investigative assignments regarding distributors of illegal equipment and also will be conducting investigations concerning operators of illegal equipment.

Peggy Cash, the fourth ex-FBI employee, has been hired as a permanent part-time administrative assistant at AAMA headquarters. Cash, who worked for the FBI 13 years, was the administrative assistant for the special agent in charge of the Newark FBI office. Her husband, Tom, is the third highest ranking official in the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration.

Fay noted that the addition of four more employees in the enforcement area, will speed up investigations and positive results will be obtained quicker. Maury Ferchen, AAMA president, stated, "By hiring some additional individuals to bolster the enforcement program shows AAMA's commitment to fighting the counterfeit/parallel import problems facing the industry."

SI REDD CELEBRATES HIS 75TH BIRTHDAY

There are few in the industry that have not heard of Si Redd. He was most recently in the industry news when he helped Digital Controls try to avoid bankruptcy.

His 75th November birthday celebration was noted in his home-town newspaper, the Reno Gazette-Journal with a flattering article, in which Redd is described as Reno's southern gentleman, the slot machine king, and a great American success story.

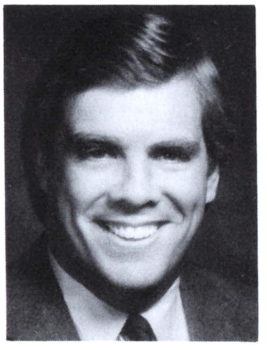
Redd purchased his first pinball machine over 50 years ago and continued to expand his industry experience which included a Wurlitzer distributorship in the '40s, setting up Bally distributing in Nevada, and forming IGT in 1975.

Redd sums up his business philosophy on a business card that reads "Rule No. 1: The customer is always right; Rule No. 2: If the customer is wrong, refer to Rule No. 1."

The Reno Gazette-Journal asked Redd to share some thoughts and these are a few that were printed: *"My mother was my foremost role model. She had a saying, Everything works together for those who have a love of the Lord;" *"It is a luxury having stiff business competition. The guy who tries to cut into our market share is doing us a favor, making us look harder at our products and our service;" and *"I'm bullish about our young citizens. If we can educate them more, the country will have an even greater future."

The industry has been honored to have Redd among its ranks, and we all wish him a happy birthday and many more to come.

PATTERSON BUYS TWO SOUTHWEST VENDING OFFICES



David Patterson

Dave Patterson, former vice president and general manager for Southwest Vending, has purchased two of the Southwest Vending offices and renamed his new venture SunBelt Amusement and Vending.

Patterson bought the Dallas and Oklahoma offices and John Gatens, who sold the offices to Patterson, will continue to run the San Antonio office under the Southwest Vending Sales banner.

The Dallas office is located at 2455 Irving Blvd.; phone: (214)638-7002. Doug Valentino is the sales manager over salesmen Ted Schweitzer and John Coble. Dennis Norwood is the service manager.

In Oklahoma Phil Oldham continues as general manager and Sam Ball, service manager. The address is 3401 S. Meridian, Oklahoma City; phone: (405)232-8373.

Atari Games said in a press release, "Atari will continue to support Dave, his vice president, Philip Wood, and secretary/treasurer Larry Legg as they have supported us in the past."

BUCCANEER DISTRIBUTING MOVES

Buccaneer Distributing has moved into a new 10,000 square foot facility in Clearwater, Florida (near Tampa). The president is Curtis Sarver and the new service manager is Jim Fennelly.

The company represents Nintendo, Premier, Taito, Romstar, and Dynamo. Two new additions are NSM and Cinematronics. John Margold of Cinematronics said, "By adding Buccaneer I believe Cinematronics will be able to offer service and parts coverage to operators in the area. Buccaneer will join Belam Southwest as authorized Cinematronics distributors in Florida."

Sarver said Buccaneer will host an open house in February for its customers, friends, and manufacturers. Numerous door prizes will be given away. The company's new address and phone number are: 6399 142nd Ave., Suite 116, Clearwater, FL 33520; (813)530-5445 or toll-free 1-800-282-6872.

MONDIAL PROMOTES YULAS

Suren D. Fesjian, president of Mondial International Corp. announced the promotion of two long time employees, Anthony P. Yula and Anthony J. Yula.

Anthony P. Yula has been appointed vice president of domestic sales. He was previously general manager of Mondial's domestic distribution activities.

Anthony J. Yula has taken over the position of general manager of Mondial's distribution. He will be in charge of management and supervision over Mondial's domestic sales offices in Springfield, New Jersey, Carle Place, Long Island, and Tenth Avenue in New York City.

BRITISH COINS CRITICIZED

Britain's coin machine industry could be in for total upheaval if recommendations for sweeping changes in the nation's coinage are accepted and implemented by the Royal Mint, reports England's Coin Slot Magazine.

After exhaustive field research, teams at Nottingham University, where much of the Mint's investigative work is carried out, have apparently convinced the Mint that British coins are too heavy and stressed that some of the low value coins will cost more to mint than their face value.

The recommendations include replacing the 50-pence coin with a lighter, smaller one, replacing the five and 10 pence coins with smaller ones, abolishing the two-pence coin, and introducing a two- and five-pound coin.

Coin machine operators will be interested in the outcome of the situation.

STATUS EXPANDS OPERATIONS

Status Games, the Connecticut and Las Vegas-based amusement game manufacturer, recently completed two deals to buy amusement routes.

Status bought the 800-machine operation of AVA of Tampa Florida; and the 2000-machine operation of Star Amusements in Nevada.

Keith Skelding, managing director of Status Games UK told England's Coin Slot, "The American company has had a very successful trading period and has naturally decided to invest the benefits in a sector of the business which can represent a back-up to its main line of manufacturing. We are now seeking to buy other larger operators in the U.S. and gradually build up a significant series of operations there. I understand negotiations are proceeding already on a number of other purchases."

WILLIAMS REPORTS YEAR-END RESULTS

Revenues for fiscal 1986 increased $42,175,000 or 65 percent to $107,125,000 from $64,950,000 in 1985. Notwithstanding the significant improvement in the operating results of Williams' coin-operated electronics business, primarily because of extensive startup, promotion, and financing costs of the new El San Juan Hotel and Casino, the company incurred a loss from continuing operations before income taxes of $4,422,000 compared with $10,769,000 in the prior year. The after-tax loss from continuing operations was $2,653,000 or $.35 per share, compared with an after-tax loss on the same basis of $2,653,000, or $.35 per share the prior year. The net loss in fiscal 1986 including discontinued operations was $3,401,000 or $.45 per share, compared with $3,247,000 or $.43 per share in the prior year.

Improved conditions within the coin-operated amusement game industry, strong product development and the addition of coin-operated telephones enabled the company's coin-operated electronics business to post fiscal 1986 revenues of $64,643,000, an increase of 162 percent. Operating profit rose to $979,000 compared to a loss of $7,538,000 in 1985.

Williams stated that it will benefit as the coin-operated amusement industry continues to recover from the recent recession. In addition, Williams announced that it is developing an advanced video game system scheduled for introduction in the fall which will permit the company to more effectively participate in the renewed interest in video games.

O'DONNELL DINNER PROGRAM BOOK

The appreciation dinner scheduled for March 20, 1987 during the ACME show in New Orleans, will honor Bill O'Donnell. Sponsored by the American Amusement Machine charitable foundation, a program book will be printed for the event. First announced in a December mailing to 650 industry firms, the book will feature a biography of O'Donnell, complete with photos and a full agenda for the evening's activities.

Intended as a permanent souvenir, the biography, "The Life and Times of Bill O'Donnell," will include pictures spanning his career in the amusement machine industry.

Industry firms are being given the opportunity to place best wishes/sales message ads in the program. Approximately 1500 books will be printed. Full page ads are $500; half page ads are $300. Black and white camera ready ads suitable for a six inch by nine inch book should be sent to Creative Connection, 2124 Bryn Mawr Place, Ardmore, PA 19003. Additional information on the ads is available from Sharon Harris at (215)426-7500. The deadline for ads is February 13.

LATEST AAMA ACTION IN THE TOM GOSS CASE

On December 15, 1986 the U.S. Attorney's Office in Atlanta filed a petition for a rehearing in the Tom Goss case.

Goss was convicted in U.S. District Court for the northern district of Georgia for infringing a copyright by distributing copies of audiovisual works, namely video games *Karate Champ* and *Kung Fu Master.*

Goss appealed the conviction and the Court of Appeals overturned the original decision.

According to Bob Fay, American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) director of industry affairs and enforcement, "Initially this is a victory for us because the Justice Department agreed to file a petition for rehearing. The AAMA has worked with the Justice Department in Washington D.C. and Atlanta, assisting them in filing the petition. Now it will be up to the 11th circuit judges to decide if there will be a rehearing of the case."

THE CALENDAR

MARCH

6 7 8

Western Convention-Exhibit of Vending and Foodservice Management, Reno Convention Center, Reno. For information, contact National Automatic Merchandising Association, 20 North Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60606, (312) 346-0370.

3 4

International Gaming Business Exposition, Tropicana Hotel Resort & Casino, Las Vegas. For information, write IGBE '87, CMC, 200 Connecticut Avenue, P.O. Box 4990, Norwalk, CT 06856-4990, or call (203) 852-0500 (ext 131).

20 21 22

American Coin Machine Exhibition (ACME), Rivergate Center, New Orleans. For information and exhibition space contact William T. Glasgow, Inc., 16066 S. Park Ave., South Holland, IL 60473, (312) 333-9292.

APRIL

3 4 5

New York State Coin Machine Association (NYSCMA) Trade Show, Turf Inn, Albany, N.Y. Contact Ann Kelley or Curt Matterson at NYSCMA headquarters, c/o Matterson Associates, 427 Kenwood Ave., Delmar, NY 12054, (518) 439-0981.

23 24 25 26

Florida Amusement/Vending Association (FAVA) Music and Games Show, Omni International Hotel, Orlando, Fla. Contact FAVA, P.O. Box 13089, Tallahassee, FL 32308, (904) 878-3134.

MAY

1 2 3

Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA) Second Annual National Team Dart Tournament, Chicago. Contact John Fetters, AMOA Dart Association, 111 E. Wacker Dr., Chicago, IL 60601, (312) 644-6610.

JUNE

4 5 6

Ohio Coin Machine Association Convention. Holiday Inn/Cleveland-Independence, Ohio. Contact OCMA (614)221-8600.

24 25 26

Bowling Proprietors' Association of America Convention. Hilton Hawaiian Village, Honolulu, HI. Contact Vladimir Wapensky (817)649-5105. (AAMA will be exhibiting. Contact David Weaver (703)548-8044.

SEPTEMBER

25 26

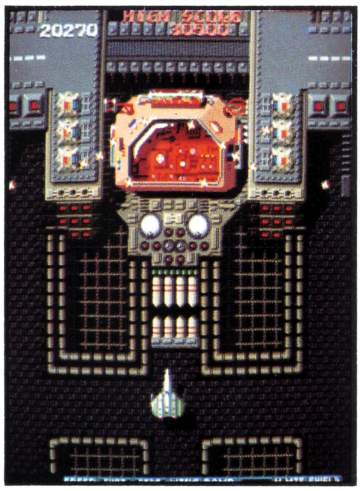
The Michigan Coin Machine Operators Association Convention. Clarion Hotel, Lansing, MI. Contact Walt Maner, (517)372-2323.

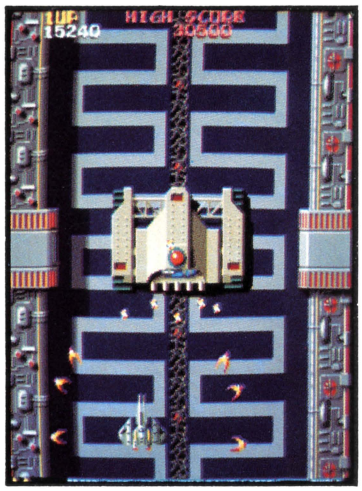
INTERNATIONAL SHOWS

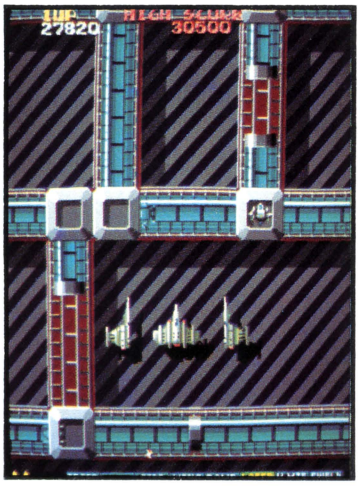
APRIL

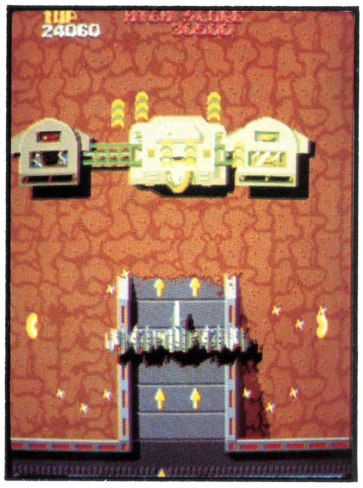
6 7 8 9

The Arab International Toys, Games, and Amusements Trade Fair, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Contact World Trade Promotions, Ltd., 19-21 High St., Sutton, Surrey SM1 1NF England. Telephone 01-642-7688.









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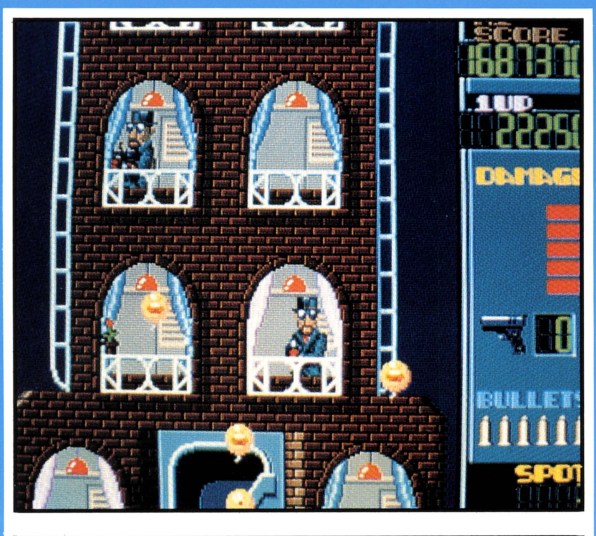

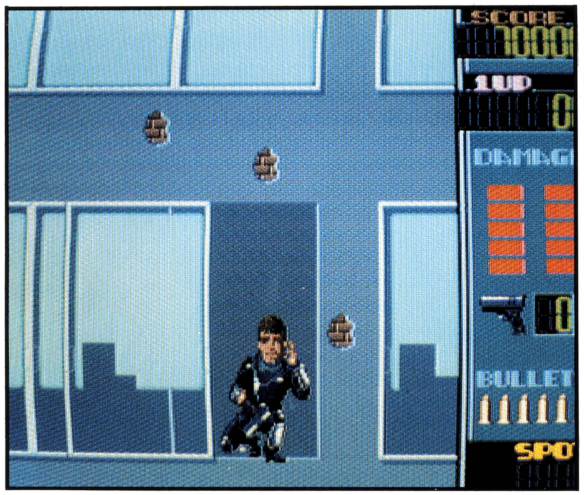

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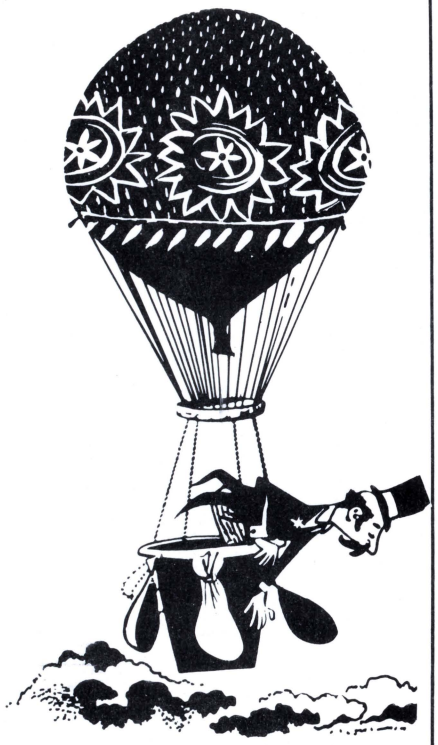
ANY
VIEWPOINT



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DYNASOFT: new kid on the block

Dynasoft, a Joplin, Mo. company, is one of the latest to join the crane game. It's first model, a single upright, was introduced at the '86 AMOA Expo.

"We first looked into cranes at the '85 AMOA Expo," said Mark Reynolds, general manager of Dynasoft. "Between November '85 and May '86 we bought our first units from several different manufacturers. We combined input from operators and tried to improve the electronics. We redesigned what we thought was a reliable mechanism--the Belgium mechanism-- redesigning the gears and trying to make improvements. The circuitry is where our best efforts have been spent."

As an operator for eight years, Reynolds has "seen lots of equipment come and go," and ranks cranes as one of the best pieces. He feels it's most important for operators to understand the concept of cranes, saying, "If you don't give away some plush, the game will die. You can build the best product in the world, but in this business if it doesn't take in quarters it's worthless. Play appeal is measured in the coinbox. When operated correctly, cranes will give out 50 cents worth of merchandise for every $2 spent by players."

Joysticks have been a much ballyhooed part of cranes. "We believe the joystick control requires less experience," said Reynolds, "and decided the joystick method was the way to go, but also offer button controls."

During the development process, Dynasoft experimented with timer options and offers four different game play modes for joystick and button, allowing the operator to switch back and forth at will by changing the software setting.

Other options include a dollar bill validator and gumball dispenser--the circuitry is built in. The game is the first one on the market to "talk" to players and announces "another winner" when a prize is obtained.

Reynolds said, "Everything we've tried to do is from an operator's point of view. We like the idea of solving problems before they become problems."

Dynasoft added extra depth to the plush area and an acrylic case that can be put on top of the machine to display larger prizes. The idea is to generate more play. Coupon or ticket dispensers allow for trading up to the bigger items. The company also offers two coin mechanisms on its unit.

When he sees cranes stocked with only little prizes, Reynolds has a tendency to believe these are items the operator doesn't mind giving away. "Operators could use some enlightenment," he said, "and discover a secret--players will continue to play if they can win something substantial. That's what keeps them playing. Big items attract attention. Invariably players spend more trying for a big item before settling for a small one. Players love figuring out how to win the prizes, grabbing the items around the neck or leg.

"Operators must make a minimum of two trips to each crane on location per week," he advises. "It can be more often. It's an occupation requiring a lot of attention. Cranes will last as long as the operators do their jobs right."

According to Reynolds, most operators don't know the differences between cranes and will have a tendency to look at price alone, falling short on the evaluation of the electronics. He sees a need for more information to help operators make their buying decisions.

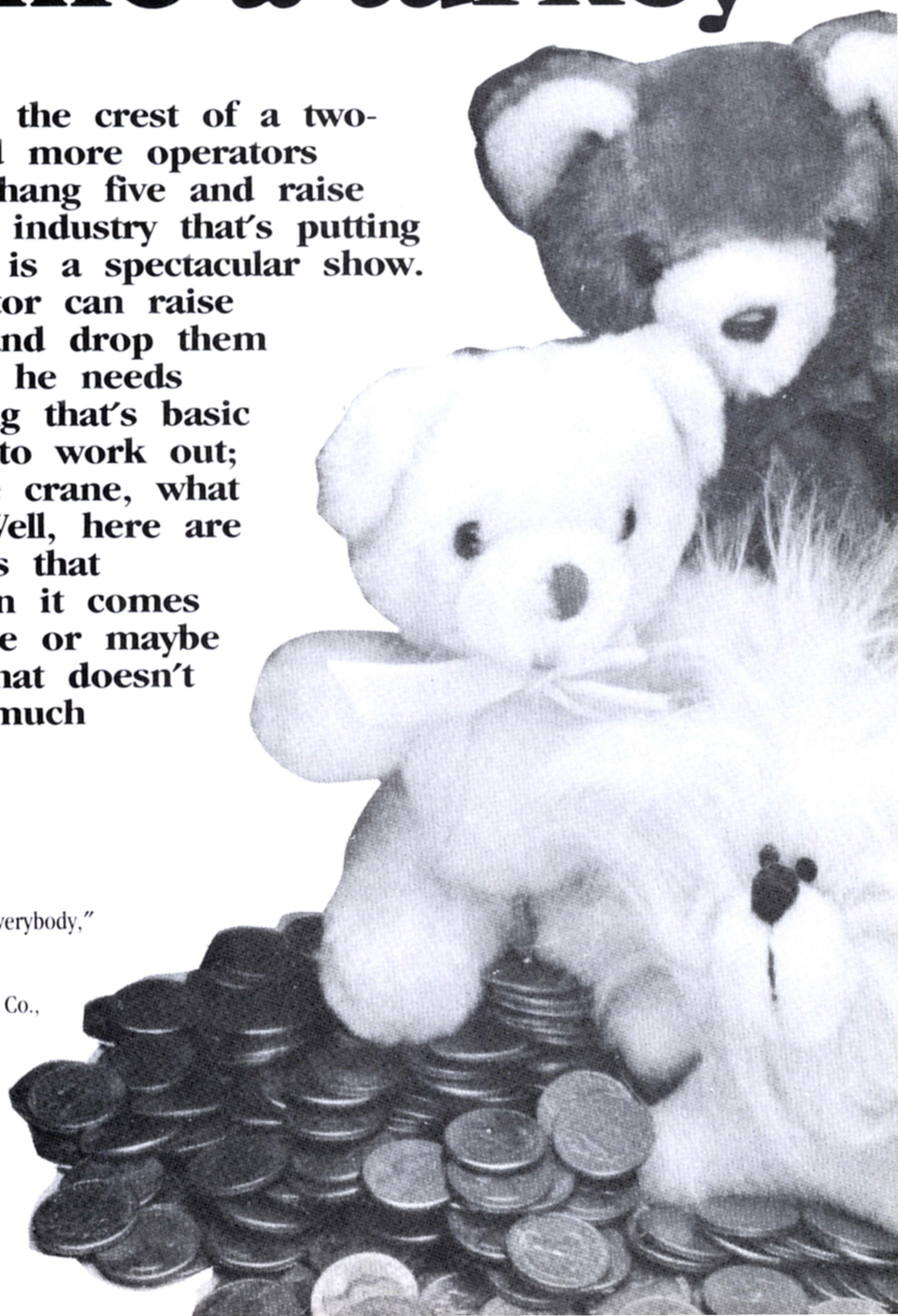
"A lot of operators have interest, but are uneducated about cranes," he observed. "Operators can be seasoned crane operators in a month, becoming well-versed in a short time after resetting and restocking their machines. We hope with more education the demand for cranes will grow."

Operators interested in finding out more about the product can contact Reynolds at (417) 781-2212.

Stuffing a crane so it doesn't become a turkey

"With cranes riding the crest of a two-year wave, more and more operators are paddling out to hang five and raise their profits with an industry that's putting on what most agree is a spectacular show. But before an operator can raise his weekly receipts and drop them into the bank chute, he needs to consider something that's basic but not always easy to work out; after he's bought the crane, what does he put in it? Well, here are some tips and tidbits that might be useful when it comes to filling a new crane or maybe even an older one that doesn't seem to be getting much of a workout."

BY RUSTY STORBECK

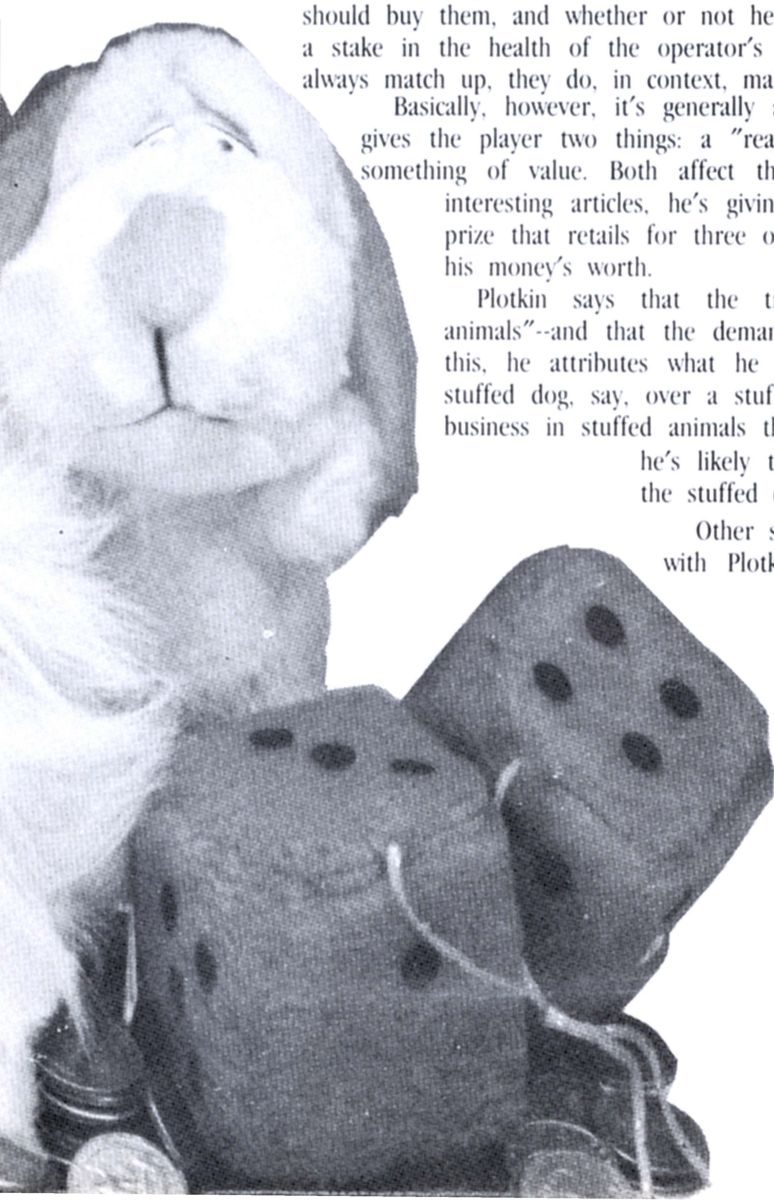


Ed Plotkin makes a good point: "Everybody," he says, has someone to win a stuffed animal for." Vice president of sales and marketing for Ace Novelty Co., in Chicago, and an operator with eight crane locations himself, Plotkin sees the industry from both sides of the counter. He's in the midst of

answering the question, Is plush still king?

Is plush still king? The answer--by consensus--is yes. Jack Kelly, for example, of ACME Premium Supply Corp. in St. Louis says that plush toys are his best sellers. Jim McVey, of the Cosa Mesa Calif. firm Prizes!,says the same, reporting that "hard goods," like jewelry, make up only 10 percent of his sales. Plotkin's figures are not far behind, with soft goods--a category that includes plush--running at 80-85 percent. It would be tough to find a crane supplier with an answer that was much different.

As valuable as the information is, however, it's not enough. A host of questions remain to be answered, questions involving, among other things, the kinds and quantities of plush toys an operator should buy, how he should buy them, and whether or not he should consider hard goods at all? Crane suppliers--who have a stake in the health of the operator's business--have some good answers. And if the answers don't always match up, they do, in context, make sense.



Basically, however, it's generally accepted that a crane will get a lot of play if the operator gives the player two things: a "reason to play," as Plotkin puts it, and, in return for playing, something of value. Both affect the operator's choice of items. If he fills the machine with interesting articles, he's giving his customer a reason to play. If the player pulls out a prize that retails for three or four dollars elsewhere, he feels that he's gotten more than his money's worth.

Plotkin says that the trend seems to be toward quality--toward "gift-store type animals"--and that the demand for larger items seems to be growing. In connection with this, he attributes what he sees as a player preference for animals over non-animals--a stuffed dog, say, over a stuffed carrot--to the fact that retail stores generally do a bigger business in stuffed animals than in other stuffed toys. When a player wins a stuffed dog, he's likely to remember the price tag he saw in the store. Not so with the stuffed carrot.

Other suppliers talk about preferences, too. ACME's Kelly would agree with Plotkin that the trend seems to be toward larger pieces. Until recently, he says, most of the crane items ordered from ACME have been no larger than seven inches. Now, he says, it's moving to about 10 inches. This is a result of the larger cranes on the market today. Kelly

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cautions operators, nevertheless, to make certain that the larger pieces fit not only through the chute, but also through the prize door.

More and more, Kelly's customers are asking for items that have a personality, "anything," he says, "that has a face." He says licensed toys generally get a lot of play because of the recognition factor. Thanks to the Saturday morning cartoons, for example, kids want the stuffed counterparts of animated characters like Wile E. Coyote, Bugs Bunny, Bullwinkle, Popeye and Olive Oyl, and Yosemite Sam, to name a few. McVey, of Prizes!, says imitations don't generate the same excitement.

Plotkin, however, has another word about licensed toys. They do, he says, move well, but they cost almost twice as much their unlicensed friends. It's advisable, he says, to

Operators check on the latest plush toys at the Brechner booth.

weigh the cost of the toy against what it brings in.

Clifford Brechner goes a step farther. His Dan Brechner & Company, of Floral Park, N.Y., has been around for about 70 years. His grandfather founded the business around the time of the first world war. Brechner may or may not agree with what the other suppliers say about licensed toys and recognition, but when his customers call him up on the phone, he says, they want to know what he has new. "If it's new," he says, "they want it." Why the emphasis on the new? Because, Brechner says, cranes are often in locations that have players who are repeat customers. If they've won a toy, they're less willing to try for it again. A fresh assortment, he says, tends to increase play.

Brechner is a firm believer in the idea that operators should keep their machines well-tended, clean, and in good repair. And if Plotkin says operators must give players a reason to play, Brechner describes the same notion by saying that the machines must be "well-flashed." In fact, most, if not all, suppliers would agree with that. McVey, for example, says, "If a customer sees an item he likes, he plays."

Building an inventory of assorted, eye-catching items, however, is not always easy. Whereas the large operator can buy cases of toys and make his own mixes, the small operator usually can't, for two reasons: the small operator often can't afford to buy big, and he often doesn't have the space to store the extra items.

Suppliers like Prizes! and Ace Novelty--both of whom have proprietors or company officers who are themselves operators--offer a solution to the problem. They sell prepackaged assortments that contain 144 items in a box, with the mix in each box based on anywhere from 12 to 20 different items. New items are rotated in regularly. The prepack concept is what has kept the small operator in the ball game. One Laramie, Wyo., operator reports that his once-dismal crane receipts went up $30-50 per week per machine after he started buying prepacks.

Plotkin explains, too, that prepacks are sold at various price levels. An operator might pay as little as 50 cents an item for the contents of one package or as much as $2 an item for the contents of another. Prices vary with the supplier. Generally speaking, though, "the more you pay," he says, "the bigger the items in the mix." The operator can use the different-priced packages to effect his own mix of items by size. Often, Plotkin says, a player will pull out two smaller items jut to get to a larger one.

The small operator, of course, isn't confined to prepacks. Plotkin points out that an operator can buy cases of a single toy seasonally--during Halloween, for example--and mix it in with his non-seasonal inventory.

Nor is the small operator--or any operator, for that matter--confined nowadays to what Jim McVey would term "crane-able" items. Interestingly enough, suppliers like Prizes! are encouraging what's called "build-up," or "trade-up," programs that enable operators to maintain inventories of larger, more expensive items that don't fit in the cranes. To obtain such items, players must win a given number of small items that can be traded for a larger one. One advantage, Plotkin makes clear, is that the program offers an incentive to the repeat players that Brechner speaks of.

But what about the so-called hard goods--are they making a entrance in the crane market? At this point, many feel that hard goods are becoming acceptable crane items, with jewelry in particular acquiring a fair measure of popularity. According to Jack Kelly, location sometimes plays a big role in determining whether or not hard goods will do well in a crane. Such items, he says, often get a lot of play in truck stops, for example, where the patrons are attracted to things like lighters, belt buckles, key chains, bottle openers, and rings. He stresses, however, that hard goods must be "properly packaged," that is, in a container that prevents them from dropping to the bottom among soft toys, where they can't be seen or picked up.

Whatever the case, this much is certain: the most successful crane operator will be the operator whose motto is "The customer must never get bored."

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EVALUATING A CRANE FOR PURCHASE

By early January of this year, some 25 manufacturers and distributors of various crane products exist. Operators are making money, distributors are selling, and manufacturers are building products.

However, the legal side of the crane story cannot be ignored. We are aware of many recent crane seizures by law enforcement. In the community of Antelope Valley, California, for example, several different models of cranes were picked up by police. Criminal charges are pending and litigation is underway. An operator in Los Angeles City was just assessed $3,400 in penalties by the court stemming from a police charge of improper crane product and use.

On December 4, 1986, the Long Beach Police Department seized a dozen cranes from several locations. I am also aware of law enforcement activity taking place in Wisconsin, the midwest and southern states, and on the West Coast in Washington and Oregon, as well as California. My company receives frequent telephone calls from distributors from around the country asking how to proceed with cranes, which models should be purchased, and if adding a gumball dispenser will make the game legal.

The purpose of this article is to assist operators in evaluating a crane product prior to purchase. We'll recap some of the legal concerns, as well as the practical concerns, in business procedures for an operator. Ultimately, we will leave you with an evaluation form for a good tire-kicking approach, in which more than a crane's first impression is scrutinized.

Since 1920, within the United States, cranes, claws and diggers have been built by a variety of manufacturers. Features varied, allegations were made, litigation was engaged in, and court rulings followed. Today some specific municipalities specifically outlaw "iron claws" and similar claw machines. These rulings came from the perceived evils of the claw machines of the 1930's, '40's and '50's.

Today, virtually every manufacturer claims that his crane is legal, skillful, dispenses a product that makes it legal, and a variety of other arguments. Some manufacturers have creditable documentation, others can only vaguely mumble that they have checked with the local police and, "besides, they dispense gumballs."

FEDERAL STATUTES

Federal law prohibits interstate shipment of gambling devices. "Gambling device" is defined as one dependent, for the most part, on chance, hazard, and designed to be used primarily for gambling. This concept is specifically articulated in the Gambling Devices Act (also known as the Johnson/Eastland, bill). Federal law prohibits shipping such gambling devices in a state where such a device is deemed to be a gambling device.

STATE STATUTES

State statutes vary somewhat from state to state; however, approximately 85 percent of the states have statutes with the same thrust and meaning as to what constitutes a gambling device--a coin-operated mechanism (such as a claw would be), wherein the machine dispenses property, money (or, in some cases, something of value) to a player, based on the element of hazard or chance.

SKILL AND CHANCE

Since the predominance of skill over chance frequently separates amusement from gambling, the degree of skill necessary to win becomes critical. The legal burden is not to show that skill is involved but, rather, the quality and quantity of skill involved, by whom and within what criteria.

I find it appropriate to once again caution readers that legal guidelines and definitions of skill are frequently interpreted differently than an operator might guess. For instance, simple activation of a button is not

necessarily skill. Inactivity is far different from accomplishing a task under a time constraint. These critical areas deserve the attention of a professional dealing in legal matters or of one dealing in the assessment of skill and chance and related issues. Legal advice is best sought through a competent attorney.

MUNICIPALITIES, PARISHES AND TOWNS

Local jurisdictions, including counties, may enact regulations stricter than those provided by state laws. Generally speaking, however, local jurisdictions cannot overturn state prohibitions. Precise locations within a community become important because of which government agency has jurisdiction over a specific location. Physical locations must be relied on, not mailing addresses.

COURT DECISIONS

Courts of many levels hear matters on a wide variety of criminal and civil litigation. The higher-level courts publish their opinions and rulings in such matters. Such "case law" rulings are reviewed by other courts and attorneys in their considerations, arguments, and opinions on similar issues.

Attorneys render legal advice; thus, the Attorney General for a particular state also renders legal opinions. Like all legal opinions, those of the Attorney General are only opinions (although highly respected) and may be challenged and subsequently reviewed by the courts. Common sense and a review of existing Attorney General opinions bring out the fact that traditionally Attorney General's opinions are at the request of a government entity and, therefore, tend to be most conservative in their views. Local city attorneys and district attorneys respond likewise on behalf of their clients--governmental agencies.

POLICE POSITION

Of prime operator interest is, of course, the game acceptance attitude of the police. From an operator's point of view, the reality is that the police department determines the legality of the game, by either accepting or, at times, confiscating the game. This acceptance is our first concern.

Law enforcement's training in gaming issues generally runs from non-existent to moderate. Nevertheless, a police officer makes that "street" decision of whether to accept or shut down a particular game. Because of their training, peer pressure, and tradition, police officers, after reviewing a game, generally find it more suitable to either 1) be noncommittal or 2) find fault in the game's design or use. After all, the investigator then cannot later be criticized for allowing the game to operate.

To assist you as an operator in evaluating cranes, obviously the legal considerations should be foremost. These matters should be reviewed with a competent attorney well versed in gaming issues.

THE CRANE EVALUATION

This article addresses evaluation of cranes beyond the legal issues. The following criteria should be considered individually and carefully and then assessed according to your local needs.

In order to give you a systematic approach, our recommendation is that once you are convinced that you are going to operate cranes (and it is my opinion that you should only undertake this after careful thought and realizing that cranes require more overseeing than, for instance, a video game), you should make use of the assessment or score chart that follows.

Once you narrow your field down to five or six possible cranes (although many more can be evaluated using this technique), it is time to kick tires and test drive. The uniqueness here is that individual considerations of cranes will be isolated and assessed based on your own background and experience. This isolation of characteristics will leave you with a more accurate bottom line, and a less emotional approach than that of being swept up the sales appeal and desire to operate.

Consider in the first category, legality, the actual documentation that you see pertaining to the opinions, rulings, and legal reviews of that product. Consider also that the more "skill" features that a machine offers, the more likely it is that the game will be deemed acceptable as a game of skill. For instance: Is the player given the option to move the claw to 100 percent of the display prize area; can the player elect to lower the claw to a chosen depth, or does the machine dictate this? There are many additional considerations.

As an operator, consider that only a crane with proper design and proper daily operation best safeguards your investment and maximizes your profits. Should you be new to the mechanics of cranes, ask questions of experienced operators as to maintenance and breakdowns. New Jersey operator and writer Frank Seninsky (Frank the Crank), has written several technical bulletins on cranes. His and other operator views may be one technical start. Bear in mind the legalities in New Jersey are vastly different than in many states.

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QUARTET 2, a highly professional team arrives on the scene to destroy and annihilate the plundering pirates. Each of the four freedom fighters perform in different degrees of jumping skill, speed and shooting power.

Cooperation is the 'key'. Using the 8-way joystick, the jump and shoot buttons, players maneuver the fighting Quartet through various battle stages. In addition to destroying the terrorist enemy, players can capture 'POWER-UP' trophies for extra advantage and point score.

SHOES: Increases player's speed.

A WATCH: Stops the enemy.

A BALL: Increases shooting power of the fighter wearing the same color.

At the end of each stage, a presentation ceremony is held. By destroying the enemy leader who has the key to the exit door, the team can then proceed to the next battle stage.

QUARTET 2 is an exciting 2 player attraction with a great return on investment.

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Here then are the parameters to guide you in making your independent choice of cranes.

PARAMETERS FOR YOUR EVALUATION OF A CRANE

Across the top, list the names of the cranes you are considering, then, using the scoring table below, rank each crane. You can then total these rankings, and come up with a total for each crane. The categories to be considered are:

LEGALITY--Is the particular model crane in use and acceptable to law enforcement in the area in which you are considering operation? Does it fall within ordinances and/or statutes that may prohibit its use? What documentation have you personally seen? If it is prohibited or questionable, seek advice first. (Rank 1-15, with 15 indicating 100 percent compliance & strong documentation seen by you)

PLAYFIELD--Can the claw reach all of the playfield? Are the instructions clearly posted and unobstructed by prizes? (Rank 1-10, with 10 being best)

TRACKING MECHANISM--Play the game at least 25 times (count them). Does the tracking mechanism move smoothly every time? Is it well built? (Remember that it must work thousands of times.) Look closely; what is your assessment of the quality of construction? (Rank 1-10, with 10 being best)

CLAW--Is the claw strong enough (structurally) to actually lift your prizes? Is the coil one that you can replace easily if it fails? Or is it an "off-brand"? Are the claw's parts well

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constructed? Does the claw appear to be a problem? As with the tracking mechanism, play it repeatedly. (Rank 1-5, with 5 being best)

SECURITY--Can a player reach up through the prize pay-out chute, either with his arm or a device such as a wire, and steal prizes? (Some kids even grab and steal the claw.) Is the front glass and/or loading door secure enough that it would require a lot of time and noise to effect a break-in? Are the coin door and coin box assemblies well built? (Rank 1-5, with 5 being best)

MECHANICS--Besides the claw and tracking mechanism, inspect the overall mechanics and cabinet of the game. Is the coin chute and mechanism going to give you problems? Is the cash box big enough? (Let's hope sos!!) Are there any rough edges? Are all parts easily accessible? Will actual restocking on site be easy or difficult? (Rank 1-5, with 5 being best)

DOCUMENTATION--Does the manufacturer provide you with detailed service manuals and bulletins? Are they in English? How about written guidelines for proper stocking? (Rank 1-5, with 5 being best)

ELECTRONICS--Look at the circuit board. Can you find these parts locally? Check your power supply. Is it rated at 125 percent of load? Are all your voltages fixed? Are wiring harnesses neat and clearly marked? Where are the important switches and fuses? (Rank 1-5, with 5 being best)

APPEARANCE--Is the cabinet attractive? Does it stand out? Is it "flashy" or just so-so? Will it be difficult to keep clean? Will it resist dents and scratches? Are the prizes clearly visible? (Rank 1-5, with 5 being best)

MANUFACTURER/DISTRIBUTOR SUPPORT--Is it there? Will it be there a year or three from now? Is technical training available? (Rank 1-5, with 5 being best)

PRICE--Is the price right for the quality of the product? How does it compare to others? (Rank 1-5, with 5 being best)

Robert J. Snyder is president of Bob Snyder and Associates, Inc., a consultant on card-casinos, carnivals, coin-operated redemption and video games, and gaming fraud. Snyder formerly was a supervisor in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department involved in overseeing game and gambling regulations. He has provided expert testimony on games and gambling over 80 times in courts in the U.S. and Canada and says that to date he hasn't lost a case. His firm consults with attorneys, government agencies, managers of amusement parks and arcades, and game manufacturers, distributors, and operators.

SCORE SHEET

	List Cranes to Test Here				
LEGALITY (1-15)					
PLAYFIELD REACH (1-10)					
TRACKING MECHANISM (1-10–					
CLAW (1-5)					
SECURITY (1-5)					
MECHANICS/CABINET (1-5)					
DOCUMENTATION (1-5)					
ELECTRONICS (1-5)					
APPEARANCE (1-5)					
DISTRIBUTOR SUPPORT (1-5)					
PRICE (1-5)					
TOTAL (perfect score: 75)					

NOTE: As a consulting firm, we deal extensively in gaming issues, such as skill vs. chance, and will be pleased to assist you and your attorney. We are here before you need us.

"THE BELGIUM CRANE MECHANISM"

BY PETER GURKO

Coin-operated cranes utilizing the "Belgium crane" mechanism generally produce comfortably high monetary returns with moderate servicing time. However, operators find themselves attending to the needs of their cranes more than other coin-op equipment on a given route, and in view of the high use and abuse these machines suffer, the added service requirements are to be expected. Understandably, the most efficient tool a crane-service person can have is the ability to rapidly diagnose the faulty section of an inoperative crane and thereby expedite its repair.

The Belgium cradle mechanism consists of five basic circuits: back, right, claw drop, grip, left, front and home. On coin-up, the player engages the back movement switch, which supplies 55VDC to the reverse/forward movement motor (RFM), sending the carriage toward the rear until the player opens the rear movement switch. If the rear movement switch remains closed after the carriage has reached its furthest position on the carriage guide rails, the motor will continue running for as little as four minutes before any circuit device will open. Depending on the type of electronic control package "married" to the claw mechanism, the circuit device may take the form of a fuse, a resistor, a diode, or any combination of these components. Some cradle devices have been said to run-on for as long as six hours without component failure.

The back movement switch provides 55 volts to the RFM, sending the carriage to its rearmost physical position on the guide rod.

Switches are subject to failure because of the nature of their use and abuse. Early warning signs such as sticking, or intermittent failure to close, should be corrected promptly or the device should be replaced.

After the player has selected a downfield position, he closes the right movement switch which provides approximately 55VDC to the right motor (RM). The cradle proceeds toward the right until the right movement switch opens. Measures for correction and prevention of failure to this switch are compatible with that of the back movement switch.

Once the right movement switch is opened and voltage to the RM removed, power is switched to the claw motor (CM) at 55VDC. As the claw drops, it holds the claw down-switch closed. When the claw reaches the bottom, the motor continues to feed string to the claw until its slackness allows the balance bar to swing up, thereby striking and opening the lift switch, providing 45-50 volts and thereby striking and opening the grip and returning the claw to cradle home.

Once at cradle home, voltage is switched to the RM, reversing its direction and driving the cradle towards the left home switch until the cradle mount plate strikes the left home switch. At this point, the carriage rides homeward until the front home switch is engaged by the front contact rod.

That is the basic operating procedure of the Belgium crane mechanism. A wide range of electronics packages are being marketed to drive and control the crane, such as microprocessor or relay directional control, system failure sensors with numerical readout of trouble area identification, LED circuit operation and interruption indicators, dollar bill validators, coin converters, credit accumulators, gum ball dispensers and a host of other features to entice operators and players as well. Regardless of the features your crane control package consists of, an accurate analysis of what is or is not occurring with the cradle mechanism will lead you to the trouble circuit, be it in the carriage or system control card.

Here are the eight most common repair areas of machines utilizing the Belgium crane mechanism. The list is derived from service queries made by operators over the past twelve months.

1. "MY DRIVE GEAR IS STRIPPING."

Early crane drive motors utilized a 22 degree pitch nylon gear to shift directional motion 90 degrees and thereby align and drive the roll pulleys on their carriage guide rods. Often, this gear would slip from its press fit location on the gear/pulley shaft and then slide toward the pulley. This sliding would cause the motor output screw to wear unevenly on the gear teeth. The gear would then require realignment of the gear to motor screw and new adhesion of the gear to the pulley shaft by means of contact cement. The slipping of the gear from its intended placement appears to be predominantly due to oversize cutting of the gears ID in respect to the OD of the shaft pulley. Various models of crane mechanisms

have been developed using spacers, set screw locks, drift pins and knurled bushings to retain drive gears. If your Belgium crane exhibits this problem, a service person can super-glue the undamaged gear back to its shaft in 45 seconds or remove and replace a worn gear in four minutes, including breaking free a once glued gear.

2. "I COIN-UP AND NOTHING HAPPENS."

Most electronics packages are providing 45-60VDC to the RFM via the back movement switch. If you coin-up and the carriage fails to move after closing the back movement switch, check: A. Switch
B. Applicable wires carrying the motor voltage (provided power is not present) C. Carriage's left guide rod pulley belt D. RFM drive gear E. Left home switch F. System control card

If an output to the carriage from the system control card is missing, the control has lost its ability to switch, (either SCR or relay) or has diminished conductive capability because of faulty capacitive/resistive network(s).

3. "MY CRANE GOES BACK, BUT NOT TO THE RIGHT."

The same system of procedures applies here as in point 2. The crane mechanism is similar to many devices we encounter each day where we use a device to enable another effect--in these cases, switched power from your control unit to the power drive devices.

4. "IT MOVES BACK, IT MOVES SIDEWAYS, BUT IT DOESN'T GO DOWN".

A. Right movement switch stuck closed B. Left home switch faulty C. Claw motor gear D. Claw motor E. No switched output from control card (some control cards utilize individual command circuits for each change in function–

5. "THE CLAW DOESN'T GRIP"

A. Claw strength potentiometer opened or changed B. Claw coil open C. Drawing too much voltage (faulty motor) D. Claw coil iron core sticking (silicone spray) E. Front home switch faulty

6. "IT GRABS A PRIZE BUT WON'T LIFT IT UP"

A. String of pulley B. Claw lift switch faulty C. System control card power switching failure D. Balancer spring broken or unhooked

7. "IT DOES EVERYTHING IT'S SUPPOSE TO BUT WON'T DROP THE PRIZE"

A. Front home switch faulty B. Unswitched output from system control card

8. "I'M TIRED OF CARRYING ALL THESE QUARTERS!"

A. UPS them to me.

I have covered the basic operation of the Belgium crane mechanism and several common trouble calls, and I have intentionally avoided service tips and analysis of electronic controls because there are at least seven viable systems available today capable of being married to the Belgium crane mechanism. Each has its own drawbacks as well as its advantages. Regardless of the individual control system, it is possible for the operator to quickly diagnose a given faulty area by:

1. Recognizing the individual circuit responsible for controlling the problem area
2. Not dwelling on circuits that do not have an effect on the faulty area during its enabled mode
3. Understanding an overview of the crane operation to include:

A. Sequence of events B. Circuits working in conjunction C. Individual control card output features

Yes, the Belgium crane mechanism can cause more service calls than a *Tempest* monitor or an early laser disc. But the short-term capital return, coupled with quick analysis of repair needs, makes the crane one of the best coin-op earners today.

WHERE THE CRANE DOLLARS ARE GOING....

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SPIN-OUT is an exciting new game that is earning four figures week after week. SPIN-OUT handles an unlimited variety of prize selections. SPIN-OUT is made in Atlanta, Georgia with all USA available parts.

"Rotary games are replacing cranes as today's top earning merchandisers and Spin-Out is the rotary game with the features to take advantage of this next generation of high profits."

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FEATURES:

- Four player action
- Flashing red "winner" light
- Tilt alarm with automatic prize door locks
- Dual Coinco coin mechanisms
- Microprocessor controlled
- Complete nudge control
- Percentage adjustments
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DIAMOND CUT STERLING SILVER JEWELRY-GREAT FOR CRANES & ROTARIES

by Frank "The Crank" Seninsky

All indications tell me that merchandise equipment will remain strong in 1987. Those who have been operating cranes for the past several months may be finding that the public is (or soon will be) getting bored with plush animals, the most common crane filler. Crane and rotary operators are part of the retail business and to increase business should go with the popular trends. Silver and white gold jewelry ARE IN!

Sterling silver jewelry in gift boxes supplied by Bonita Marie Co. . Great quality merchandise for your cranes and rotories.

Sterling silver closely resembles silver and white gold. The Bonita Marie Company in Toms River, New Jersey, specializes in diamond cut quality sterling silver jewelry, packaged in beautiful gift cases (Figure 1) for cranes and rotaries. Prices range from $9/dozen to $48/dozen. Each of the company's current 90-plus items is coated with rodium, a silver protector and tarnish inhibitor.

Bonita Marie's president, Lou Cappetta, Jr., has been operating cranes, rotaries and redemption equipment at his family's Seaside Heights, New Jersey arcade practically since he began walking. I fondly remember his late father Lou Sr., as one of a handful of highly respected arcade operators who patiently spent time sharing with me the finer aspects of merchandise and redemption.

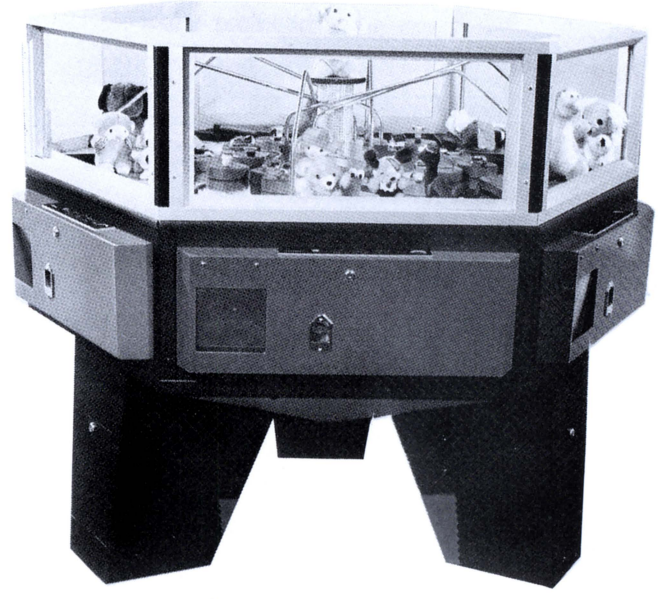
Lou Jr. got involved in merchandise production originally because he wanted a better quality of costume jewelry to keep his arcade customers playing. When he found the quality items he wanted, it was natural for him to start taking orders for his nearby competitors. Word travels quickly in this business and it didn't take long for Lou's hobby to become his full-time occupation.

I would like to recommend Bonita Marie Company's products to bring up those crane collections!

"NEW 6-PLAYER ROTARY BY CENTURY VENDING"

One piece of merchandise equipment that caught my eye at this year's AMOA and Park Shows was the Century 6-player rotary merchandiser (Figure 2). I have been operating 4-player rotary games (mostly *Fantasy Island*) for the last few years and they have been excellent earners in parks, arcades and large gamerooms. In addition, my rotaries attract many new customers into the arcades, who are not video game players.

Last year Century Vending placed several of its larger 8-player rotary games in arcades like Knotts Berry Farm, Pizza Time Theater, Pier 39 in San Francisco, and Aladdin's Castle. They have been the number one earning piece in all but one arcade that I checked into. The one where it was not number one was in a poor location in one park. This year's new 6-player game is 30 percent smaller, measuring 62-inches in diameter and has been improved.



"6-Player Rotory" by Century Vending. It's expensive but will be the top earner in your arcade for years.

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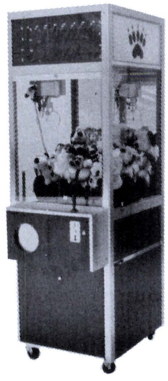
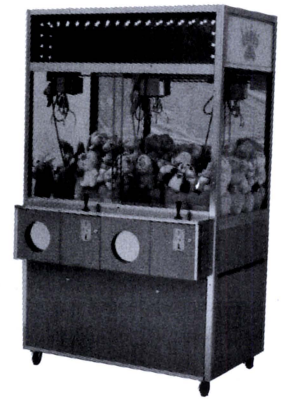
BEAR CLAW MEANS BIG PROFITS!

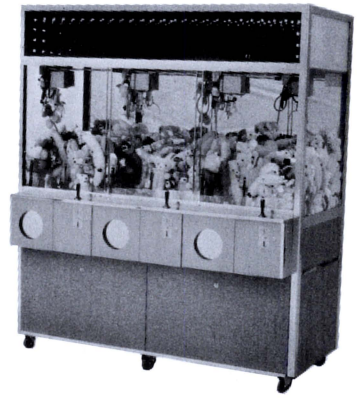
A high volume machine that requires very low maintenance because of safe guards programmed into the unit. There are two game programs built into the game board. This allows you the selection that best fits your location. Optional dollar bill acceptor mounted on the coin door, eliminates the need of making change and increases the machines use. This means higher volume and profits!



SINGLE CLAW UNIT
Dimensions:
26¼" Wide
34" Depth
58" High (Trailer Mounted)
81" High (Floor Model)



TWO CLAW UNIT
Dimensions:
48⅜" Wide
34" Depth
58" High (Trailer Mounted)
81" High (Floor Model)



THREE CLAW UNIT
Dimensions:
71" Wide
34" Depth
58" High (Trailer Mounted)
81" High (Floor Model)

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SINGLE PLAYER
2-PLAYER
or
3-PLAYER

- Two Game Option (Fast or Skill)
- Superior Joy Stick Control
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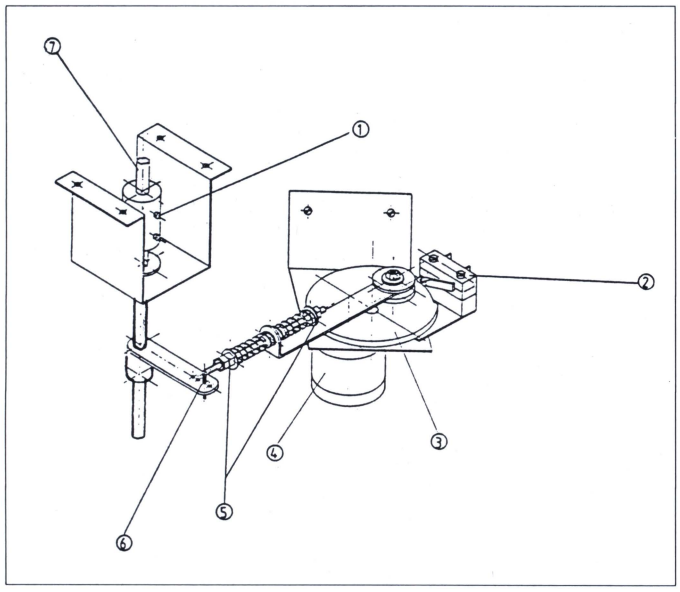


ARM ADJUSTMENTS ON THE 6-PLAYER ROTORY: 1) Loosen grub screw to adjust height and position of arm. 2)microswitch assembly. 3) aluminium drive cam: with dwell for arm control over a period of the arm's arc. 4) arm drive motor. 5) drive assembly: loosen off lock nut and adjust spring tension accordingly. 6)moment lever: unscrew nuts from threaded pin connecting to moment lever to adjust stroke of arm if required. 7) arm extention.

1) Quality 110 volt/60 cycle motor. It's a pleasure to work with equipment that has been designed for U.S. electrical requirements. These motors will last longer than the ones designed by European manufacturers for 50 cycles and 220 volts.

2) Variable turntable speed. This allows the operator to control the win percentage so prizes almost any size and weight can be used.

3) "Nudge" feature. These are settings that permit the player to tap the control button to nudge (control) the prize arm for approximately 1/3 of the arc of the turntable. Players enjoy the nudge feature.

4) Arm system adjustments. Several simple adjustments (Figure 3) make it easy for an operator to keep this rotary in top operating condition.

5) Sound feature. There is a sound on every coin in-put and again on every prize win. There is also an easily reached volume control.

6) Adjustable floor wheels. The floor wheels can be adjusted either up or down with a wrench. When the rotary base is lowered to the floor (this is recommended), the wheels are up in their storage position. One person can perform this operation, which is important when working with an 800 pound machine.

7) Tempered glass top.

8) Standard 25-cent coin mechanisms.

9) Hinged panels. The coin door/control panels are hinged at the bottom, for easy opening and closing. (The show model didn't have this feature). The 6-player rotary is made in Australia by Leisure & Allied, a company that has been specializing in rotary merchandisers for the past 10 years. It is being distributed in the U.S. by Century Vending and Distributing in Los Angeles. I highly recommend it for parks and large arcades. Lease/purchase deals are available from Century.

SERVICE TIPS

A) *Buggy Challenge* (Upright): If your game won't power-up unless it is repeatedly turned on and off, it is recommended that you get a new power supply.

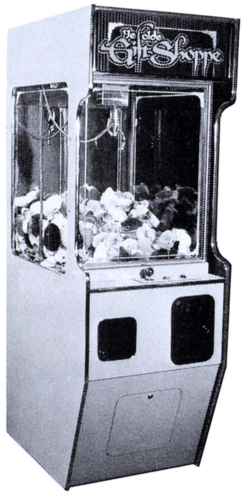
B) Some games (example: *Robotron*) will occasionally reset during game play if the game manual is laying on top of the power supply. Keep the manuals one the side away from the power supply to eliminate overheating.

Thanks to Buffalo, New York operator, Bill Johnston, for taking time to drop me a post card with some of his tips. I wish there were more like him in the industry.

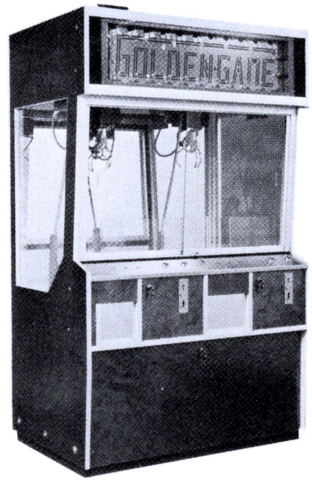
EQUIPMENT

Alpha-Omega has been busy selling used videos and pins to fellow operators. This is an indication that operators are more interested in good buys on used games than they are in purchasing new games. In the last column I evaluated the hot games shown at the AMOA show and not much has changed since. *Out Run* is still doing great and for the past two weeks Atari's *720 Degrees* has been my number one earning game. As for kits, *Arkanoid* and *World Series* are outearning the rest.

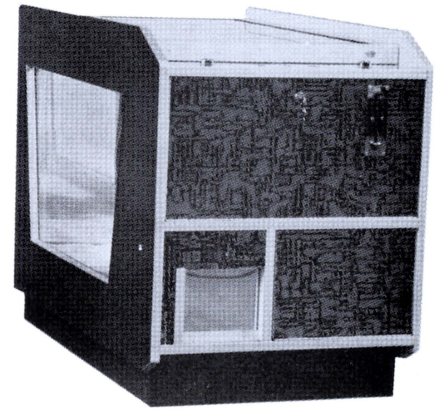
If you would like copies of articles I have written on cranes and redemption equipment which appeared in Star Tech Journal, call or write me at Alpha-Omega Sales, 6 sutton place, Edison, NJ 08817. (201)287-4990.



Altec Manufacturing
Ye Olde Gift Shoppe



Atlantic & Pacific Amusement
Golden Game



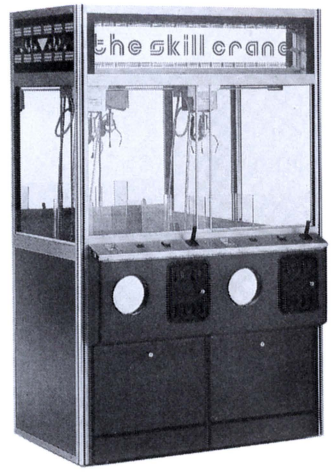
Atlantic & Pacific Amusement
Low Boy Crane

Betson Enterprises
Big Choice Triple Crane
(also single, double and Big Choice Jr.)

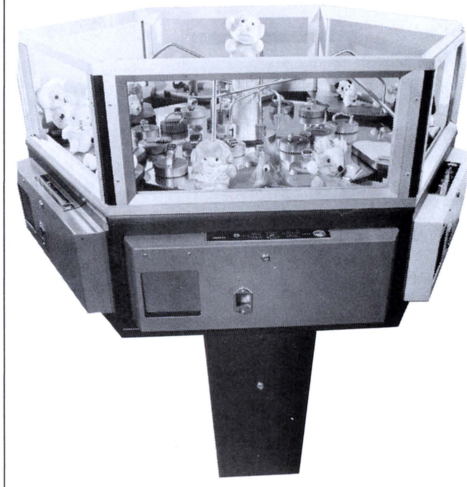
Betson Enterprises
Your Choice Low Boy

Betson Enterprises
Fantasy Island (rotary)

Betson Enterprises
Vegas Roulette
(token or ticket coin-pusher)



Brady Distributing
Bonori Double Skill Crane
(also single and triple)



Century Vending
6-Player Rotary

THE STAR

The Crane with Character

That Works as Good as It Looks!

Fastest return on investment of all cranes. 2-times larger plush capacity, size-for-size, of all cranes.
THE MOST RELIABLE MECHANISM AND CLAW UNIT ON THE MARKET.

Backed by a lifetime warranty. Want to know who builds them best? See who backs them best!

Factory also pays shipping on advanced replacement of modular components.

Models and Sizes:

Monster	Jumbo	Super Single
Single	Mini	Oak-Casablanca
Double	Triple	Countertop Fun Shop

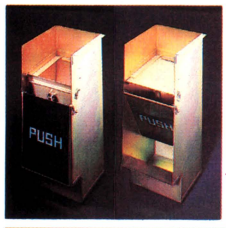
New Standard Features:

1. LED Display
2. Micro processor P.C. board with changeable E-proms makes many different game plays available.
3. Exciting sounds during game play, attract cycle and win cycle.
4. Plush payout counter.
5. "800" Toll-free service number.

Other Features:

1. All metal construction.
2. 1/4" tempered safety glass.
3. Lighted control panel (optional).
4. The most adjustable claw on the market.
5. Convenient 1-door entry for servicing.
6. Secure, separately enclosed money box.
7. Maximum security double-door redemption chute eliminates clothes hanger theft (optional).
8. On-field service kit (optional).
9. Rowe $1 and $5 acceptor (optional).
10. 4-sided viewing (optional).
11. Gumball dispenser (optional).

Left: Redemption Chute
Right: Casablanca Model
Bottom: Monster Model



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With Rowe Bill Acceptors Optional
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Counter Top Model
Height 21″ • Width 21″ • Depth 22″

FEATURES

- Optional Menu Selection
- Adjustable Win Percentages
- Selectable Cards Or Bears Graphics
- Raise Feature Optional
- Adjustable Minimum Hand To Win
- Adjustable Points Per Play
- Adjustable Coins For Wild Cards
- Adjustable Maximum Bet Feature
- Adjustable Number Discards Per Hand
- Adjustable Bet For Wild Cards
- Progressive Feature Optional
- Hi-Lo Feature Optional
- Half Bet In Hi-Lo Play

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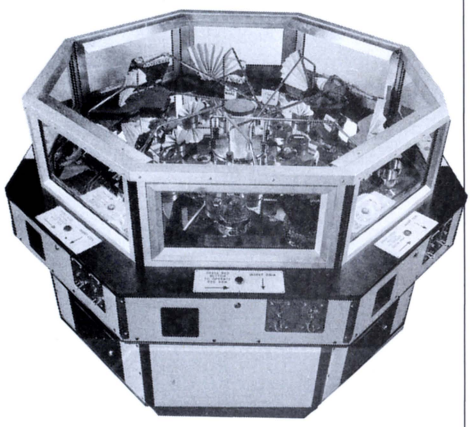
Manufactured in the U.S.A.



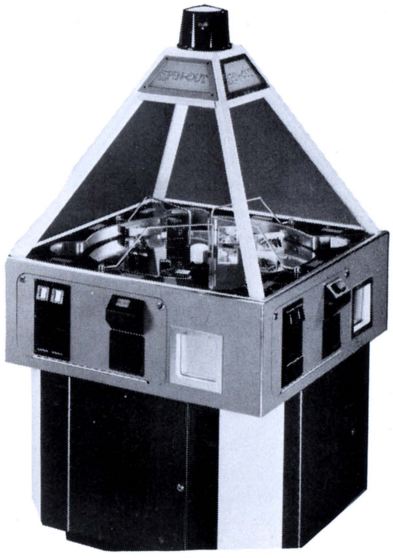
Century Vending
8-Player Rotary

Coin-It Companies
Fortune Crane

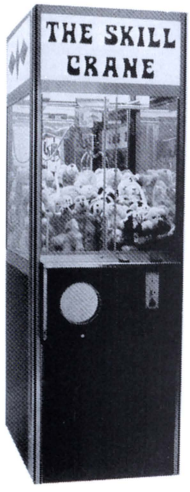
Coin-It Companies
Fortune Rotary

Funtek
Goldigger

Funtek
Midway Crane



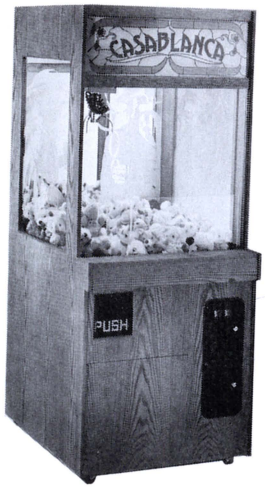
Game Masters
Spin Out (rotary)



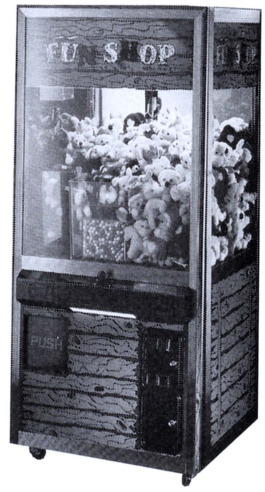
Global Imports
Skill Crane

Grayhound Electronics
Skill Crane

Grayhound Electronics
Jumbo Skill Crane



Hollywood Cranes
Casablanca

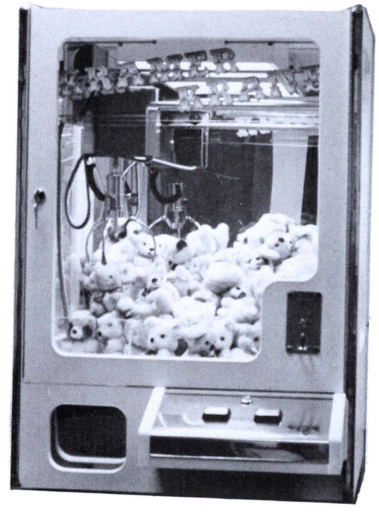


Hollywood Cranes
Fun Shop

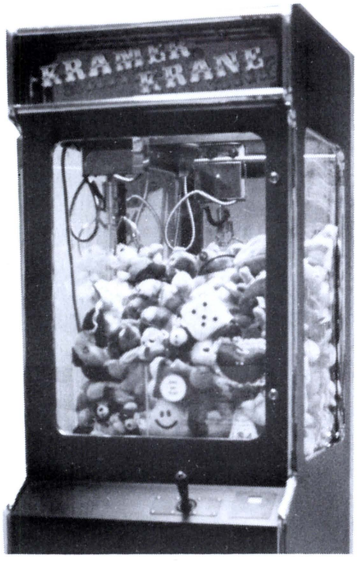
Hollywood Cranes
Monster Crane

Hollywood Cranes
Original Hollywood

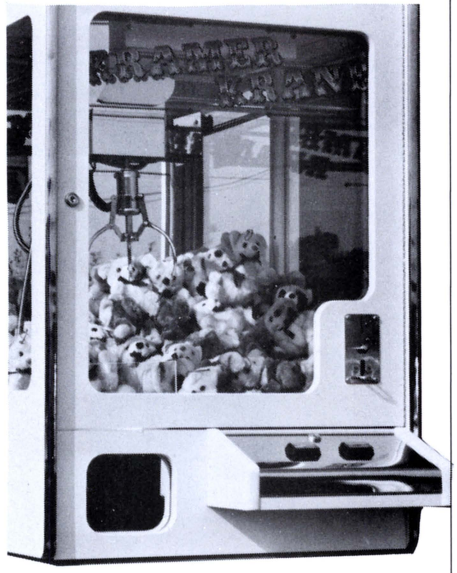
M. Kramer Mfg. Co.
Gum Ball Krane



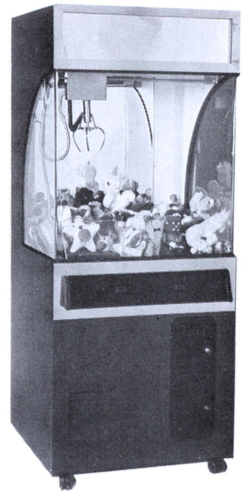
M. Kramer Mfg. Co.
Kramer Mini Krane



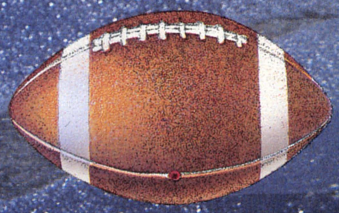
M. Kramer Mfg. Co.
Model 2000 (upright)



M. Kramer Mfg. Co.
Model 2000 (countertop)



Riviera Industrial Mfg.
Riviera Claw (upright)



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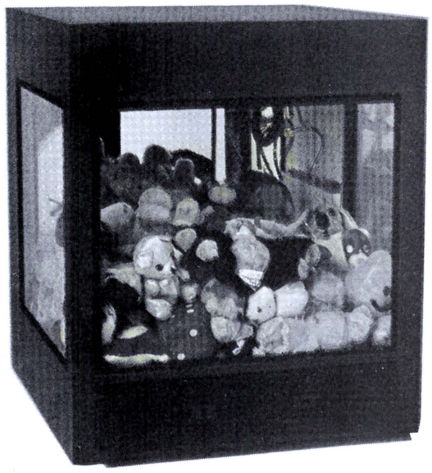
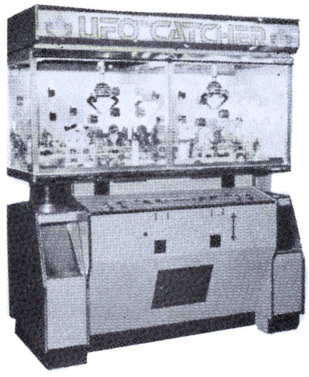
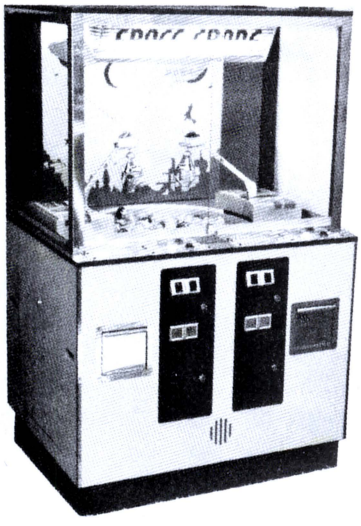


Riviera Industrial Mfg.
Riviera Claw (countertop)

Roth Novelty
Diga Mart by Sega



Roth Novelty
UFO Catcher by Sega



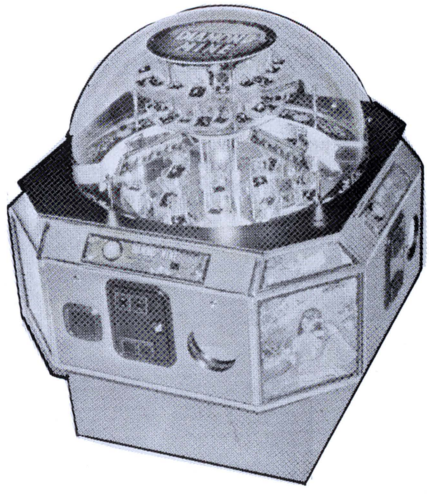
Sega
Space Crane

Showcase, Inc.
Deluxe Mini Single

Showcase, Inc.
Showcase Cocktail

Showcase, Inc.
Showcase Double Crane

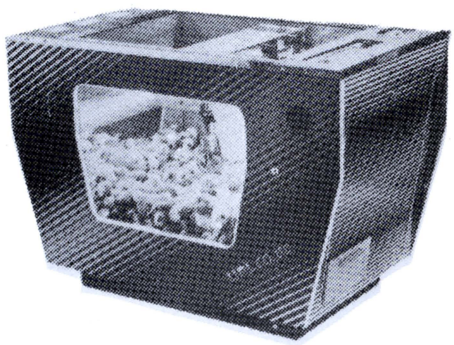
Smart Industries
Clean Sweep Triple
(also single, super single and double)



Smart Industries
Diamond Mine (rotary)

SMS Manufacturing Co.
Skill Crane

Taito America Corp.
Double Chance (rotary)

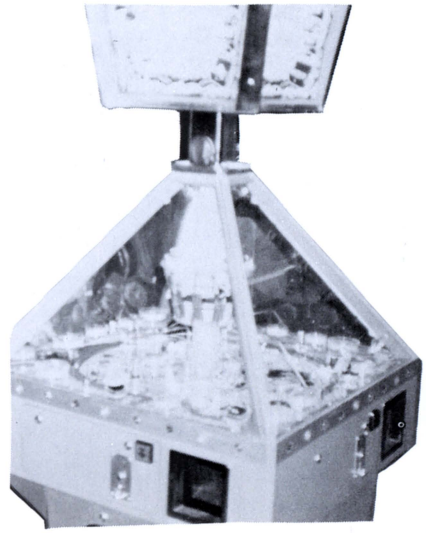


UAI New Jersey
Lucky Crane

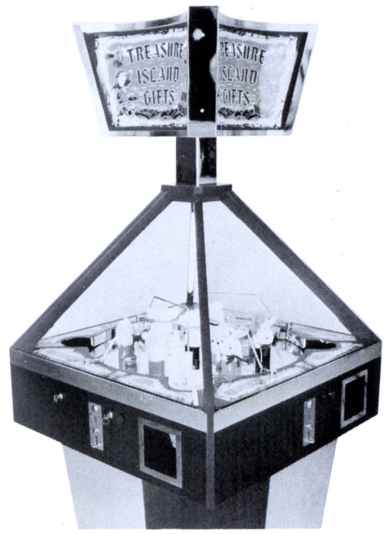
Spencer Industries
Skillmaster

UAI New Jersey
Sonic Tripleway Crane
(also single and double)

Wedges/Ledges
Carousel-Challenger 4
(also single)



Spencer Industries
Treasure Chest



UAI New Jersey
Treasure Island Gifts (rotary)

PHOTOS NOT AVAILABLE

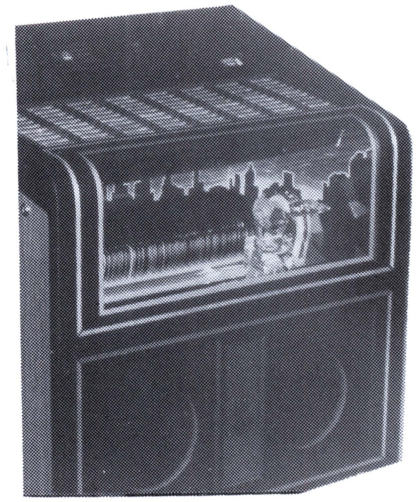
Amusement Service Co.
Blitz Crane

Betson Enterprises
Top Choice
(oversized one-player with eight-inch claw)

Roth Novelty
Miracle Hat
(token or ticket coin pusher)

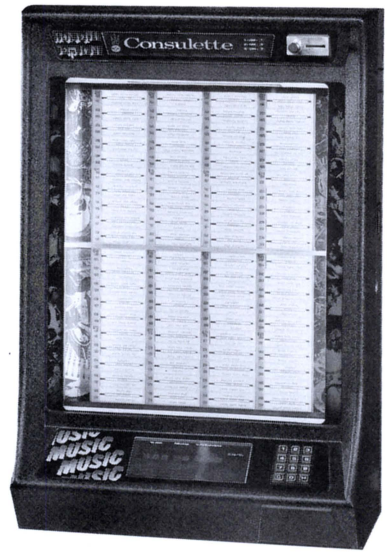
Entertainment Video
Maxx II

Laser Video Music
LVM Entertainment System



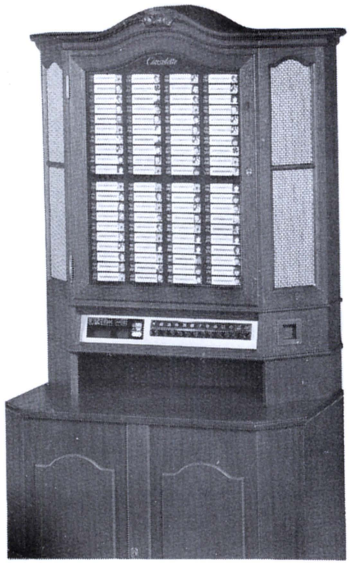
NSM/Loewen- America
City II

NSM/Loewen-America
Concert 240

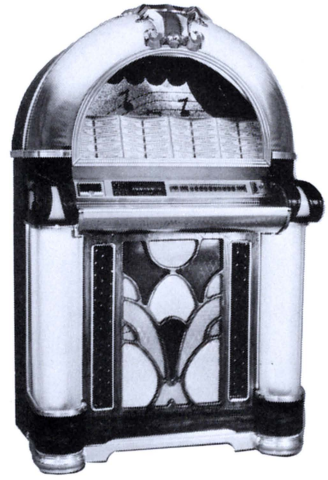


NSM/Loewen-America
Consulette ES IV

NSM/Loewen-America
Prestige II



NSM/Loewen-America
Soundmaster Compact



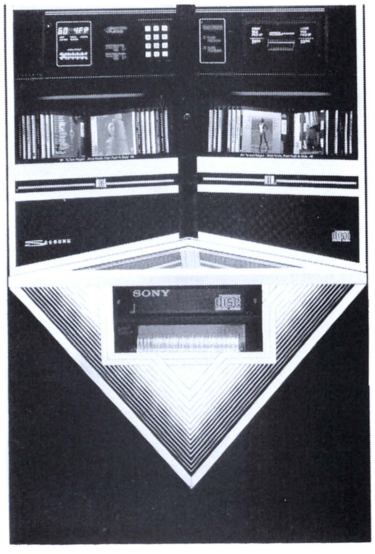
Rock-Ola
Nostalgia Model 1000

Rock-Ola
490-1

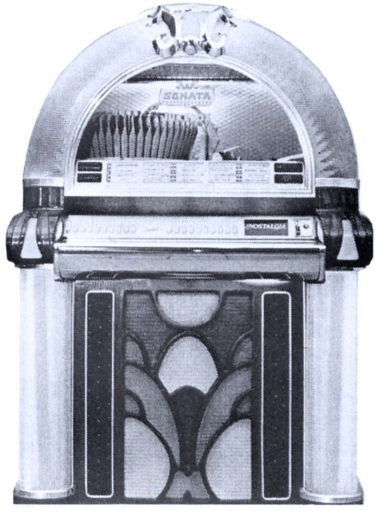
Rowe
Golden 91

Rowe
Sapphire 91

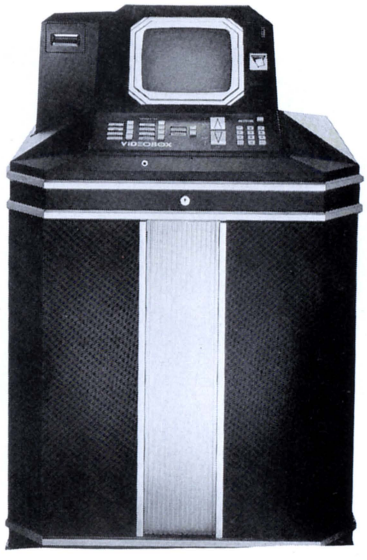
Rowe
The Rowe Video Jukebox



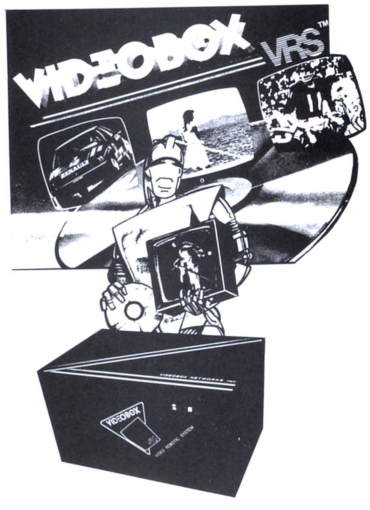
Seeburg
SCD-1 Laser Music System
(employing compact disc accessories)



Sonata
Sonata 1050
(replica of Wurlitzer 1050)

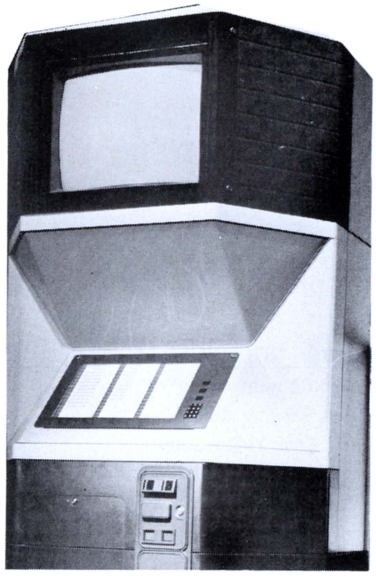


Videobox
Videobox

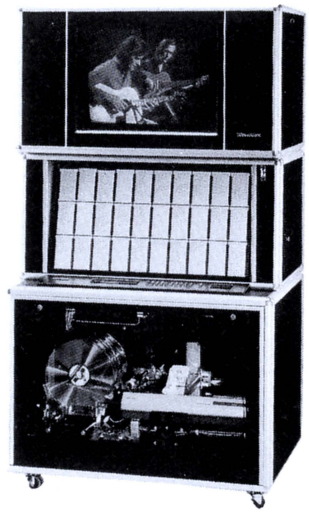


Videobox
Videobox VRS

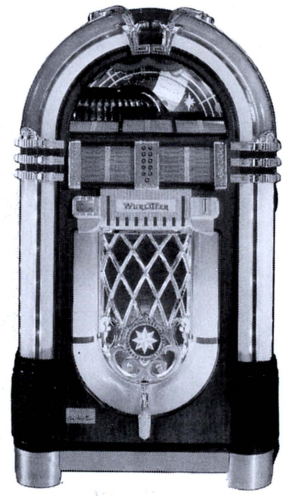
Video Laser Systems
Audix 2000



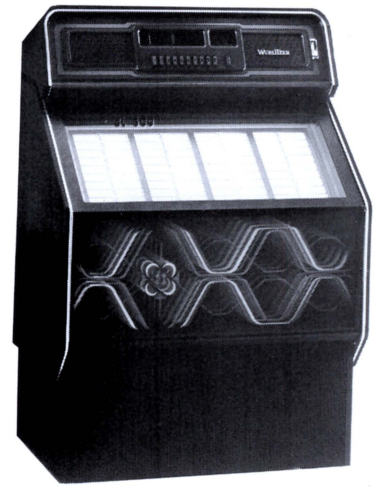
Video Laser Systems
Audix 3000



Wurlitzer
Lasergraph



Wurlitzer
One More Time



Wurlitzer
SL 600

Wurlitzer
SL 800

Wurlitzer
Playmate Escort Wall Box

Wurlitzer
Tarock

PHOTOS NOT AVAILABLE

Entertainment Video
Video Display Board
Coca Cola Video Van

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"OLD RELIABLE"

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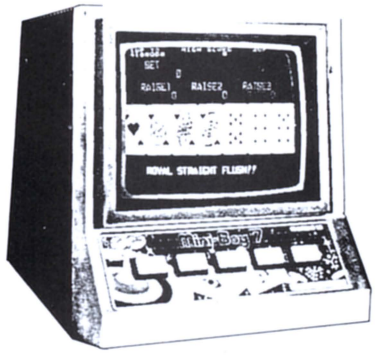
In New Jersey
(201) 370-3030
Telex #132168

SMS Manufacturing Corp.

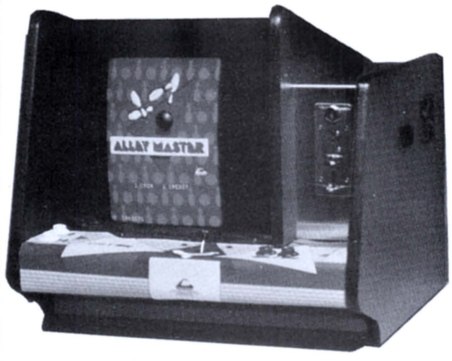
Adrian Enterprises
Memory Quiz

Astro Vision
Astro Memory Game

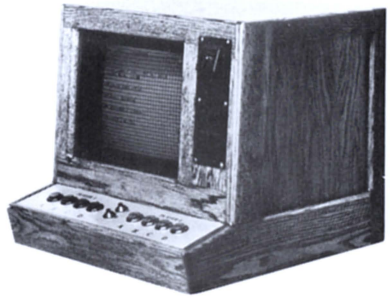


Bonanza Enterprises
Mini Boy 7

Bonanza Enterprises
Mr. Computer



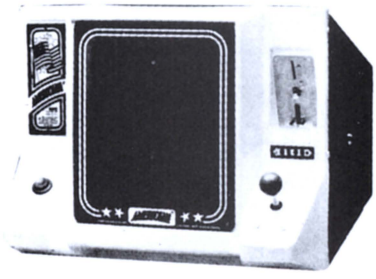
Cinematronics
Alley Master



Cinematronics
Info-Mania Reflex

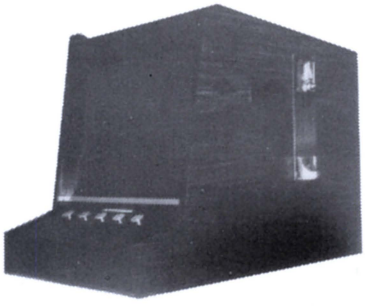
Cinematronics
World Series

Computer Kinetics
Shoot Out/Acey Deucey



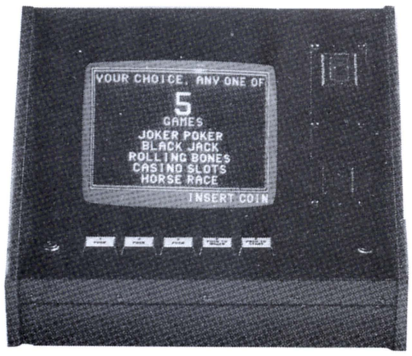
Computer Kinetics
You Pick-It

Entertainment Enterprises
Mini Vegas

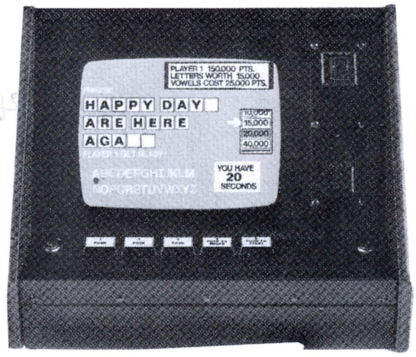


Entertainment Enterprises
Reno Games

Gametronix
Split Second

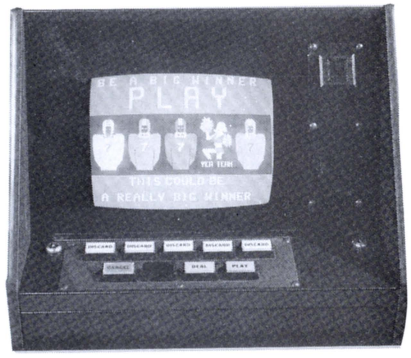


Grayhound Electronics
Atlantic City
(also upright, cabaret, cocktail and kit)



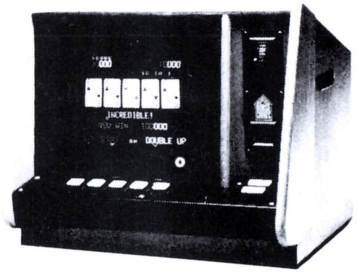
Grayhound Electronics
Reel Fun
(also upright, cabaret, cocktail and kit)

Grayhound Electronics
Reflex
(also upright, cabaret, cocktail and kit)



Grayhound Electronics
Superbowl (or Super Bear)
(also upright, cabaret, cocktail and kit)

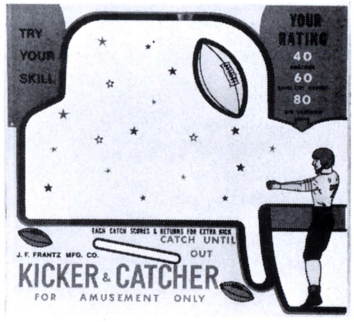
Grayhound Electronics
Video Trivia
(also upright, cabaret,
cocktail and kit)



House of Cards
House of Cards

Intermark
Reflex

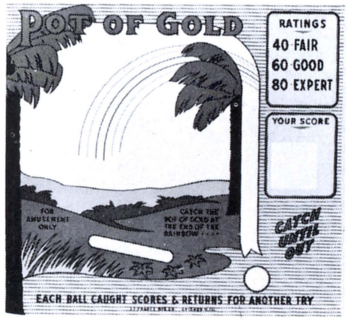
Johnston Products
Big Top Pinball



Johnston Products
Kicker & Catcher

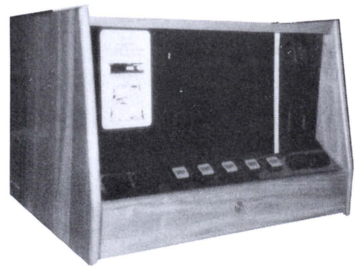
Johnston Products
Little League

Johnston Products
Long Shot

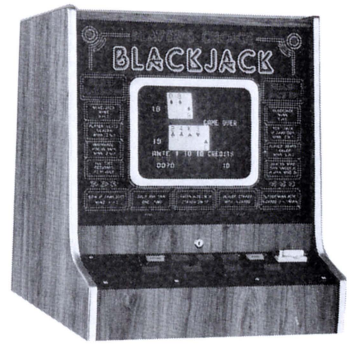


Johnston Products
Pot of Gold

M. Kramer Manufacturing
Trivia Madness
(also upright, sit-down and kit)

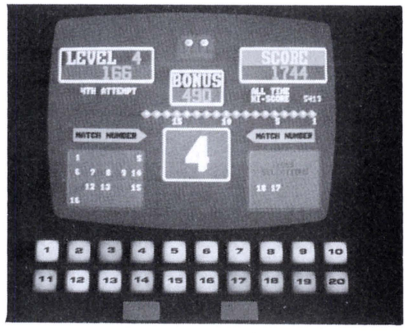


Merit Industries
Bill Acceptor Countertop

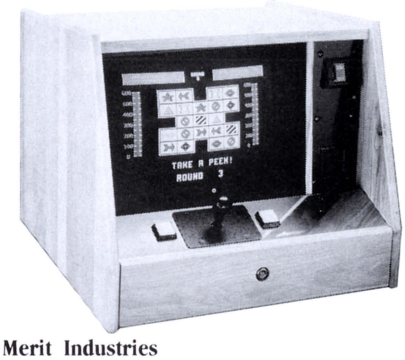


Merit Industries
Black Jack
(also uprights, cocktail and kit)

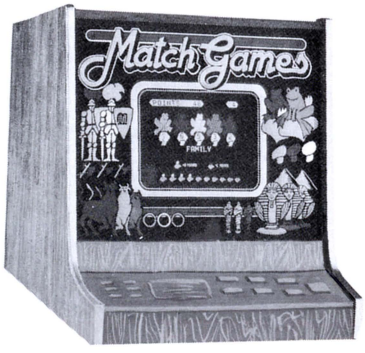
Merit Industries
Chicken Draw
(also uprights, cocktail and kit)



Merit Industries
Mad Adder
(also uprights, cocktail and kit)



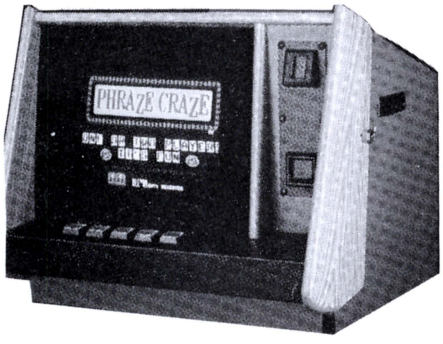
Merit Industries
Match 'em Up and Sex Match 'em Up
(also uprights, cocktail and kit)



Merit Industries
Match Games
(also uprights, cocktail and kit)

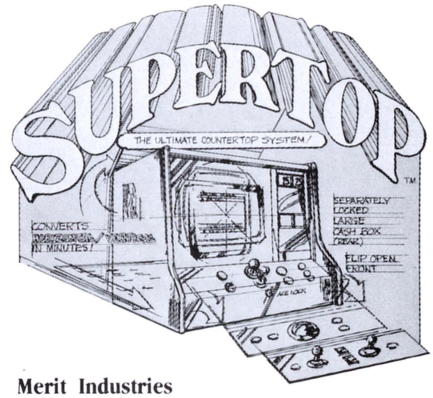
Merit Industries
Pit Boss
(also uprights, cocktail and kit)

Merit Industries
Pit Boss Jr.
(also uprights, cocktail and kit)



Merit Industries
Phraze Craze and Sex Phraze Craze
(also uprights, cocktail and kit)

Merit Industries
Riviera Hi-Score
(also uprights, cocktail and kit)

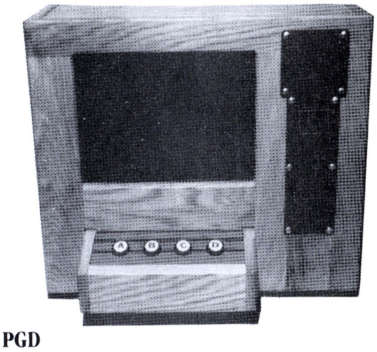


Merit Industries
Super Top
(universal countertop)

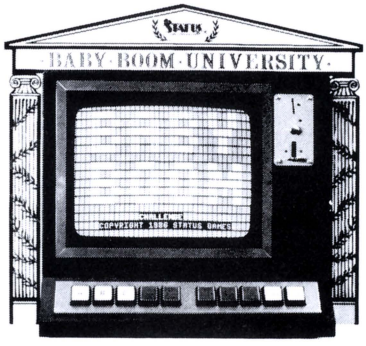
Merit Industries
Tic Tac Trivia I, II, III, and Lightning Round Tic Tac Trivia
(also uprights, cocktail and kit)

Merit Industries
The Big Apple
(also uprights, cocktail and kit)

Merit Industries
Trivia Whiz I, II, III, IV
(also uprights, cocktail and kit)



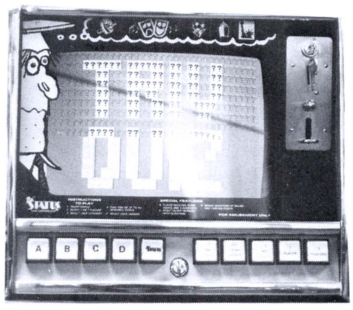
PGD
Progressive Music Trivia



Status Games
Baby Boom Challenge
(also upright, cocktail and universal kit)

Status Games
Fun Casino

Status Games
Hangman
(also upright, cocktail and universal kit)



Status Games
Triv-Quiz I, II, III, IV.
plus Sports Triv, Super Triv and Sex Triv
(also upright and kit)

Sunn International
Chips

PHOTOS NOT AVAILABLE:

M. Kramer Manufacturing
Hi-Lo Double-Up Joker Poker
Jackpot Bonus
Riverboat Poker
(all above in countertop and upright)

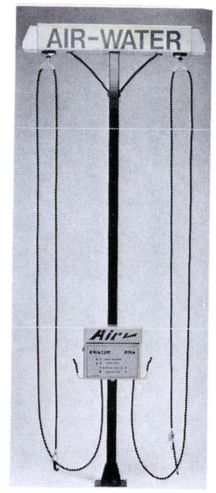
Merit Industries
Casino 5
(in countertop, uprights, cocktail and kit)

Status Games
Rack 'n Roll
(dedicated countertop or kit)

Status System II
(a one-board system with three original games: Sure-Shot, 19th Hole and Spectra

SMS Manufacturing
Bingo
Bonus Blackjack
"Old Reliable" Hi-Lo Double-Up Joker Poker and deluxe model
Second Chance
Sure Shot
(all above in countertop and upright)

Air Check
Air Check



Air Check
Retrac-a-Hose

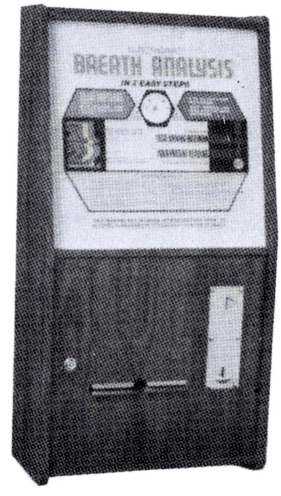
Air Depot
Air Depot

Air=vend, Inc.
Air-serv

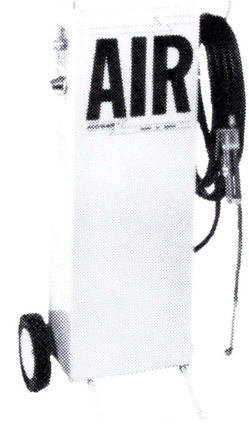
Air-vend, Inc.
Duo-serv

Air-vend, Inc.
Vac-serv

Air-vend, Inc.
Windshield Washer Fluid Dispenser



Alcohol Countermeasure Systems
Alcohol Guard

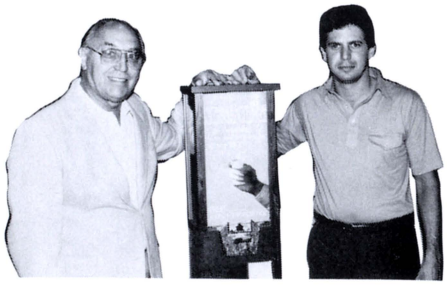


Alliance Industries
Acc-U-Air Tire Inflators

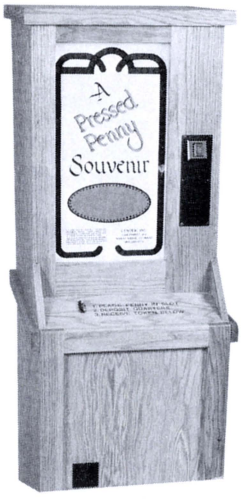
Allstate Distributors, Ltd.
Breath Alcohol Tester

Astro Vision
Astro Scale

AVS Systems, Inc.
Autoasis



Brooke Co. Marketing
Breath Shot



Centek
Penny Press

Century Vending & Distributing
Photovideo

Communidyne
Breath Analyzer

Computaweigher, Inc.
Weight Check

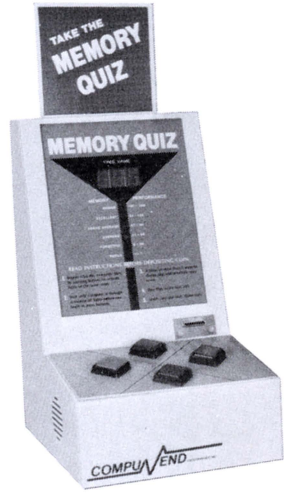
Computer Instruments Corp. Measure Your Fitness

Compuvend
Astro Rhythm

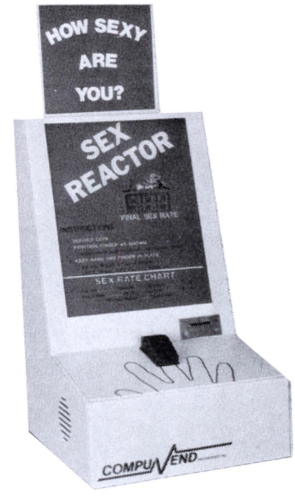
Compuvend
Bio-Scanner

Compuvend
Instrumed III

Compuvend
Love Meter

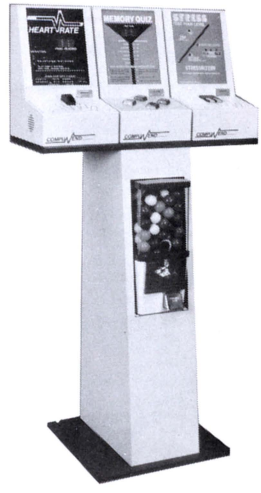


Compuvend
Memory Tester



Compuvend
Sex Reactor

Compuvend
Stressalyzer I



Compuvend
The New Generation

Compuvend
Psychoanalyzer

Dynalog
Weighmaster

Eastern Manufacturing
Breath Test

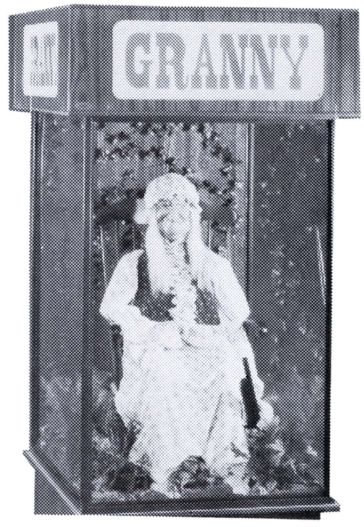
Glendale Distributors, Inc.
The Parrot

Innovative Industries, Inc.
Fred Flintstone Lucky Eggs

International Balloon Systems
Cappy Cotton Candy

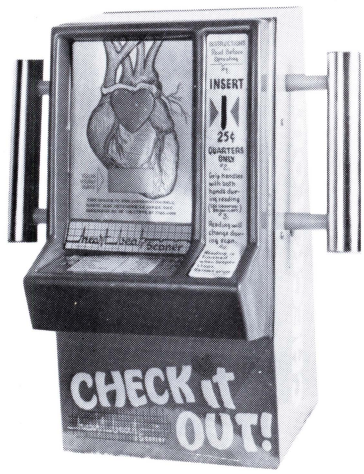
International Balloon Systems
Fanky Malloon

Intoxigraph, Inc.
Intoxigraph

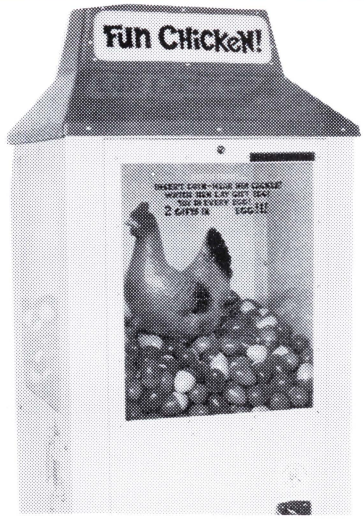


Kiddie Ride Exchange
Rocking Granny by Pan

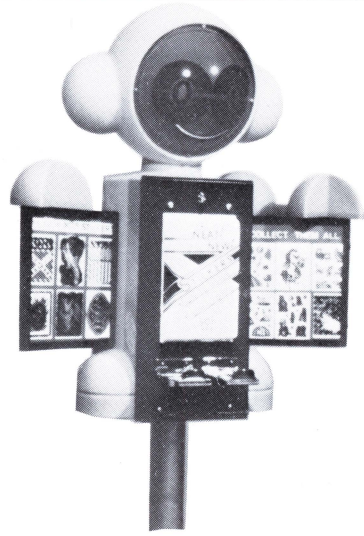
Movie Hut
Breath Alcohol Scanner



Movie Hut
Check It Out!



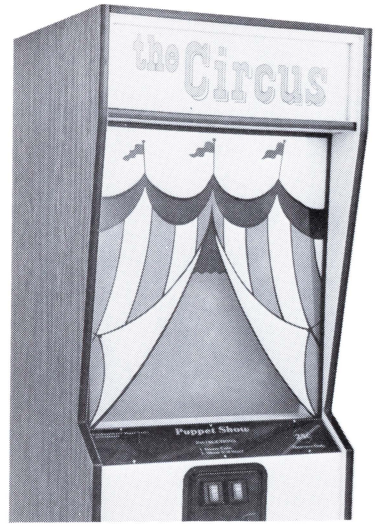
Movie Hut
Fun Chicken!



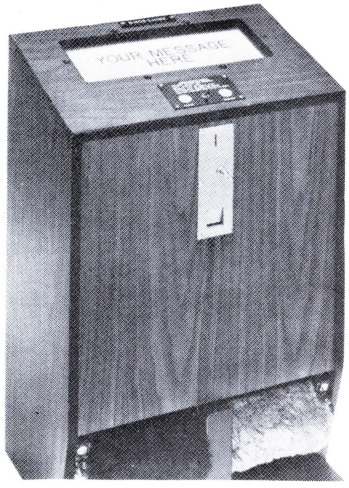
Movie Hut
Tobi

Movie Hut
Vend-A-Sticker

Omaco Enterprises, Inc.
Omaco 4000



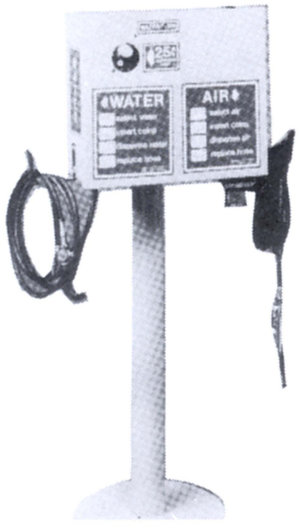
O-Sun Company
The Circus



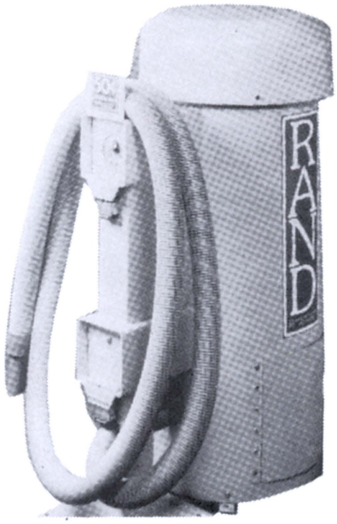
O-Sun Company
The Valet

Profitable Games, Inc.
(formerly Destron)
Lil' Top Circus

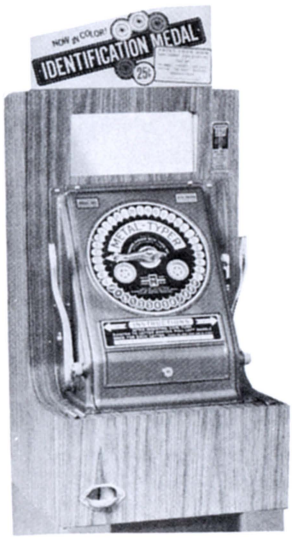
Rand of Phoenix
Air Machine



Rand of Phoenix
Air/Water Machine

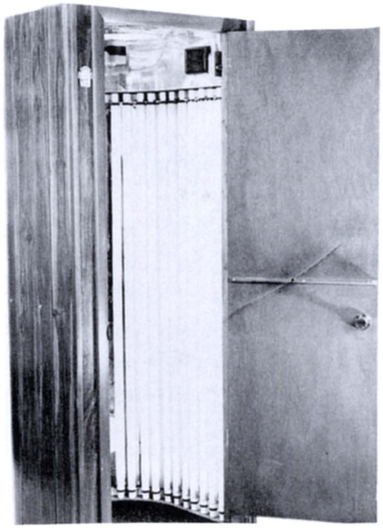


Rand of Phoenix
Vacuum



Standard Metal Typer
Metal Typer

Tan Me, Inc.
Sauna Tone



Tanning Hut
The Tanning Hut

Tech Vend Marketing
BP 5000

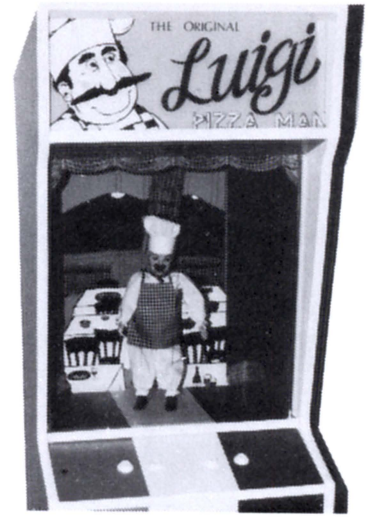
Tech Vend Marketing
Data Care 1000

Tech Vend Marketing
Heart Rate Mini Clinic

Tech Vend Marketing
Pulse Meter

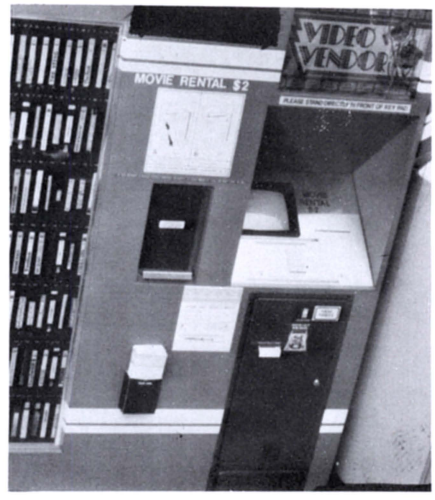
Toledo California
Health Corder

UBI
Bimbo The Clown



UBI
Luigi

Videomax, Inc.
Videomax



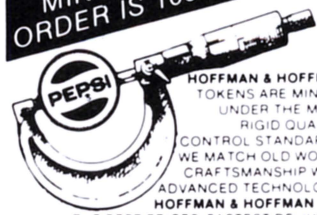
Video Vendor
Video Vendor

PHOTOS NOT AVAILABLE:

Innovative Industries, Inc.
Chicken Machine

Royal Carona
Royal Carona 3000
(30 lamp tanning bed)

TOKENS
MINIMUM CUSTOM ORDER IS 1000 TOKENS.



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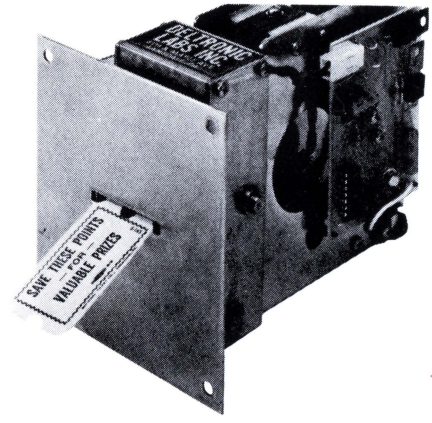

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Astro Vision, Inc.

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Nepean, Ontario, Canada
K2E 6T7
(613) 226-7515

Bonanza Enterprises Ltd.

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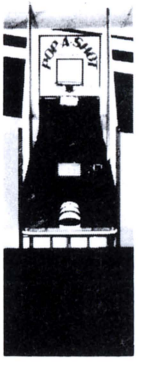

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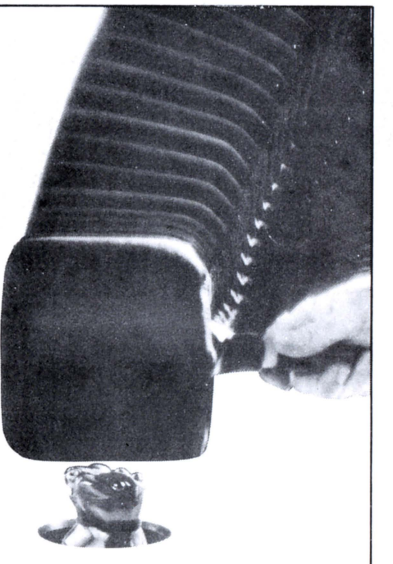

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"Now that operators are hot on cranes, they have a tendency to look at equipment with short term vision."

BY VALERIE COGNEVICH

Tim Prize

Tim Prize's company, Centek, manufactures a unique specialty machine, the souvenir penny press. The customer pays a quarter to have his own penny flattened paper thin and embossed with a logo or saying of the operator and location's choice.

Tim has been in the coin-op entertainment business for 16 years beginning his industry career as an operator in Detroit before moving to Denver. In Denver he formed Vending Alternatives, a full line vending, music and games company, still owned by Tim. A customer had asked him to pick up some equipment in Winter Park Colorado and the location happened to have had a hand cranked penny press. Tim was intrigued by the machine and started looking into making a coin-operated model. It has taken Tim over a year to develop and produce a working model of the coin-operated version of the penny press but he says the response has been great. He formed Centek as the manufacturing extension of his business.

Tim said there are only around 15 hand cranked penny presses nationwide and most of them are antiques. There is a club of people who collect the elongated pennies. These hand cranked penny presses have been smashing coins, Tim notes, since 1893. The old hand crank machines usually end up in someone's garage where one of the grandkids stumble across it, take it to a carnival and start cranking the coins out.

Since there were so few machines they turned into collectors items. Tim mentioned a museum in Colorado that displays a penny press alongside of its antique minting machines.

What type of locations are good for specialty machines?

Even though these machines would be classified as specialty equipment, they are put in locations with amusement devices and kiddie rides. But where the amusement devices appeal to all the operators, with our machine, for example, we have to depend on the operator who has a specialty account--one that has high tourist or turnover traffic. Our piece won't do well in a bar unless it is a specialty place. We have a location in Denver called El Rancho that is a little city within itself with a restaurant and post office with its own exit off the expressway. Something like that does very well because tourists stop there.

Where specialty pieces really fit in are the locations that are attractions of some sort or another. Our penny press makes it possible for tourists to get a small momenta of their visit. So it falls within the industry on the amusement end but the biggest attraction is to the location. But getting back to the operator, the biggest advantage is in the split. It is usually at 80/20 with the operator getting the biggest share.

Why would an operator be able to demand a larger share of commission on your penny press machine?

The dies are custom cut so the operator can't use that machine in another location unless he changes the die. So he

can deal with a location as an exclusive place for this machine. Also, it is an advantage for the location to have a machine of this type to advertise its business. The customer is taking a little piece of the location away with him.

What kind of return on investment can an operator expect from your machine?

I can look at it in two different ways, either the first five months like operators are used to looking at video games or the long term view which is how they should view this machine. In the first five months we won't come close to making what a video will do, especially now that manufacturers are not flooding the market with a new piece every 30 days which has increased the life expectancy of a video.

But we try to make to our customers look at the long term outlook. If we shipped them a machine and they left it in the box and left a new video in the box, in a year the operator could uncrate them and my machine will make the same money then as it would make now. But you can't do that with a video game. The video game has built-in obsolescence. It's just through the technology of the industry that it would be obsolete even though it is brand new. But our equipment and other specialty equipment won't do that. But actual dollar returns may be smaller at first but they are consistent. We have heard collections of $225 a week with our machine in high traffic locations. One customer of mine puts his machine at a ski resort during ski season then replaces the die and puts it at the zoo during the summer.

Can the die be used over again once it's been taken out of the machine? Are they expensive?

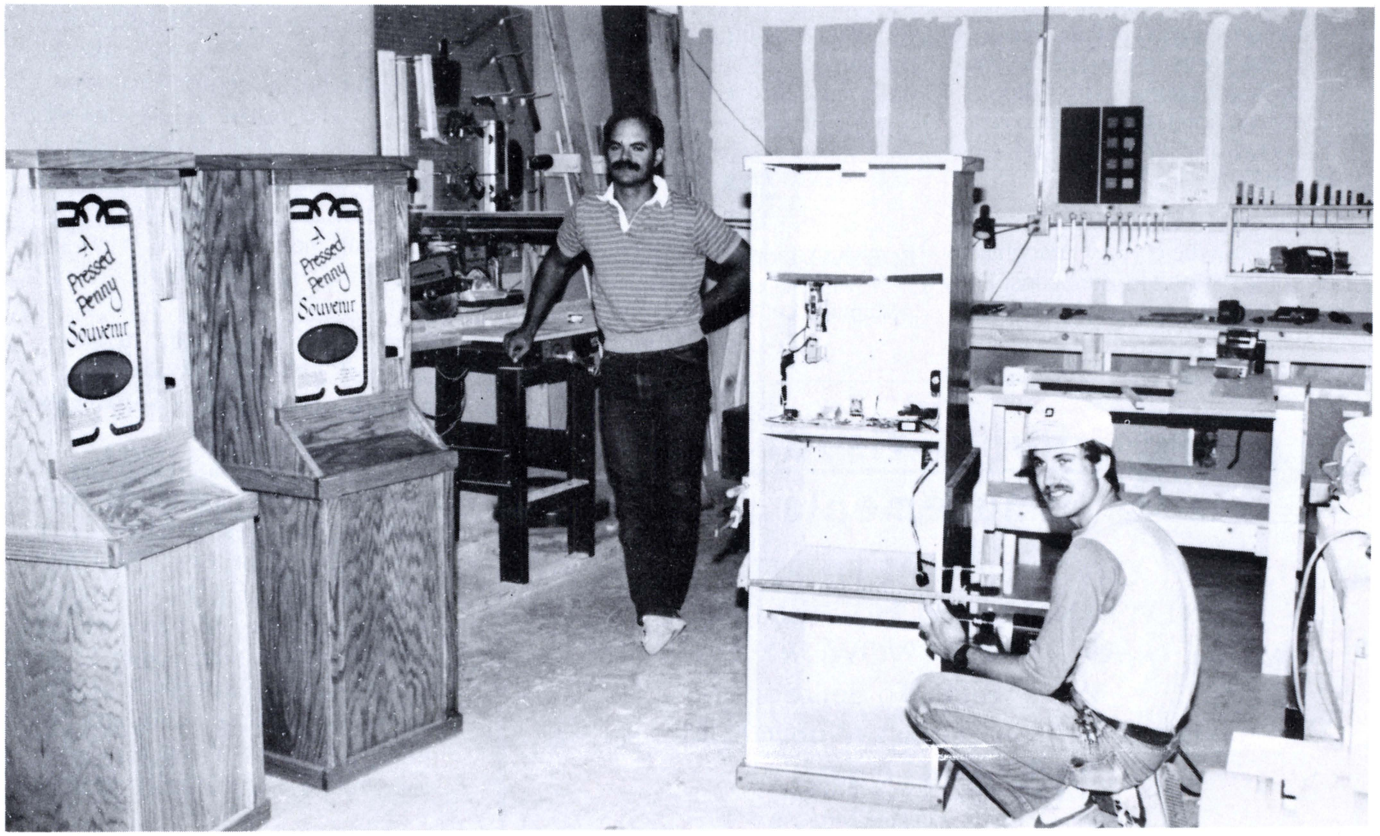
It absolutely can be reused. They break free right out of the press with only one screw. They cost $150 per side which includes all the artwork and all the engraving. The machine goes out with the die the customer ordered. Then if they want to change it, they can send artwork for a new die.

What about maintenance on the penny press?

The motor produces seven-inch-pounds of torque and has a five year warranty on a constant run basis. However, our vend cycle is 12 seconds and it is only under load for five or those 12 seconds. As far as breakdowns, it is more of a people problem and not a problem with the machine itself. Someone may jam the coin-mech or something that we have no control over. The dies are hardened in the neighborhood of 58 - 60 rockwell]ed. note: this is an industry measurement for hardness[. We virtually guarantee the die for life on any kind of wear.

Isn't there a federal law that prohibits defacing U.S. currency?

We initially contacted the U.S.



Jeff Mazurek and Dennis Lee headup Centek cabinet department.

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treasury in Washington and received a reply from Kenneth Gubin, the chief counsel for the Dept. of Treasury. We sent samples of our product and our brochures, to which he cited Title 18, U.S. Code, Section 331 "the machine described in your advertisement produces a non-fraudulent alteration of pennies and therefore such action would not be considered a violation of the above mentioned statute." They do not want someone to fraudulently mutilate currency. For example, if I were to take a quarter, or penny or whatever and took an engraver and wrote "buy vending machines from Tim Prize" and put those coins back in circulation where people were spending them that is using it fraudulently. But as far as our coin, it is mutilated to the point where it is no longer legal tender. Another consideration is devaluation. What we have to do is sell that coin for more than its face value. So knowing we have taken a penny and rolled it out, it will have to sell for at least two cents. People look at me so seriously and say "you can't do that!" The government also cited a couple of instances that we would fall under: magicians coins where they take a coin and hollow it out; they also cited jewelry, where people are taking old liberty head dimes and making them into necklaces. So they are mutilating the coins but are selling them for more than face value as opposed to just defacing it.

What made you decide to get involved producing a specialty machine instead of a video game?

I had a salesman with me at the time named Nick Conrad who was the head of production and involved in design at a major factory that made lathes and drill presses. We could have gotten into that same area but we weren't just sitting down to decide to get into manufacturing. But when we found this hand crank press, we were intrigued with how it worked and decided to find out what happens

and if we could produce it. When we found out what the response was, we knew it was worth spending more time with. So I think the machine came first and then we decided to get into manufacturing. We were pretty much tunnel-visioned on that piece of equipment at the time.

Did your experience in the industry help you get a feel for the market?

From the time I got into the vending business my market was always within a serviceable area as far as being an operator. So you could service a two hour radius from your office. The other thing was that when the industry tightened up you did have a lot of competition out there. I'll go back to the video game thought a minute: when operators were buying equipment left and right and ma and pa were mortgaging their houses because they were going to make a million dollars buying a Pac-Man, the industry just blew up. You really couldn't even secure a location because the media had the locations so wise that they would call you and ask for equipment by name and model number as opposed to saying they wanted a video game which at one time was the case. So the interest and what was enticing about going into manufacturing was to sell nationally and to have a piece of equipment that no one else produced. People call us, we don't have any competition, and we can deal coast to coast. It is a whole lot easier than when you don't have competition.

You talked about a couple of locations that were ideal for the penny press, but are there others?

Museums, parks, truck stops, I've got one going to an operator who operates at Churchill Downs during the Kentucky Derby, one is going to Indianapolis for the Indianapolis 500 race, one is down in Georgia in a hotel with a die of the Georgia skyline, I've got one at a water sport place, and Wisconsin Dells. I've been contacted by Disney World, Busch Gardens, and Sea World for their accounts.

Do you sell your machine through distributors or direct to operators?

I am having a rough time going through distributors. I don't think the distributors are strong enough right now. They want me to send two or three to put on their show floor on a consignment basis. We aren't in a position to do that. We do a double mailer, one to distributors with information about our company and equipment. And we send one to operators. Hopefully, the operator will contact his distributor and I am able to work through that distributor. If the operator contacts me, I quote a flat price that we don't vary from. In turn if the operator has a distributor he benefits from doing business with, such as credit terms, I'll have them tell the distributor to call and I'll see what we can do on distributor pricing. But other than that, distributors are looking for equipment to be put on their floor at no charge and with the number of distributors we can't afford to take that risk.

You really went on an extensive campaign against the business opportunists back in the video boom days because they were a serious threat to the business. Do you see now things that are threatening the industry?

I think that the manufacturers were the biggest problem when they were making money producing so-so games and the biz ops were so strong people were buying virtually anything which meant you couldn't update your equipment fast enough for the location. There was always someone knocking on the locations' door with something newer or better. I think the industry is much healthier than six years ago when we had the problem with biz ops. We must have had eight or 10 in Denver.

Now that operators are hot on cranes, they have a tendency to look at equipment with short term vision. It has been drilled into them that they have got only six months to make their money back and make a profit. We have a rough time because with that train of thought its hard to convince the operator that our equipment is going to be there for a period of time. To a degree, what is really promoted in the video end of the business is a deterrent from our sales since we are trying to sell to the same people that are looking for the quick return on their investment instead of realizing they will get their money back ten times over with our machine but it will take longer.

But with video, for example, if the operator doesn't make his investment back and profit in the first year, he stands a good chance of not making it at all.

Unfortunately, operators sometimes look at specialty equipment like ours and say, "my god it costs the same as a video game! I can buy a video game and get my money back in six months but this won't take in as much!" But our machine doesn't have that built-in obsolescence like video. It has longevity and will be making money five years from now.

Another thing we opted to do is go with an oak cabinet. We could have saved a lot of money and put it into a video cabinet. But I think offering it in an oak cabinet, one that will weather the years of machine popularity is a big advantage. There is not a lot of equipment that are pieces of furniture.

What comments do you hear the most from operators?

The first thing you hear, no matter what you're selling, is that it's too much money. That's automatic. An operator will walk up, and without

PLAY METER ASKS:

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF THE INDUSTRY?

"I feel the amusement games are making more money and they will continue to pick up over the next few years."

ILLINOIS

even looking into the machine, will ask how much it is and in the same breath say it's too much. So that's fairly easy to get around because everyone else hears it too. You just get into a description and the advantages of your machine. The next thing is that he is intrigued with the machine and must think about whether he has an account that warrants this type of game.

While an operator walks through a trade show, everyone with a video game has a chance of selling him a game to replace what he has. Our machine isn't like that. The operator has to determine whether he has a location for this machine that is on a ongoing sales basis. Another comment I hear from older operators is that they want an antique machine or why don't we have a header on the machine to make it look older or why doesn't it have claw feet. So the interest lies with an account they have in mind but they may want minor changes on it. The operator always seems to want it a little different than how it's made.

And by the way, we will make those changes! I've had people who wanted a cash box in front instead of the side because they planned on banking it so we modified the machines. If the operator wants a change we will be happy to do so whether its on the silk screening or anything else.

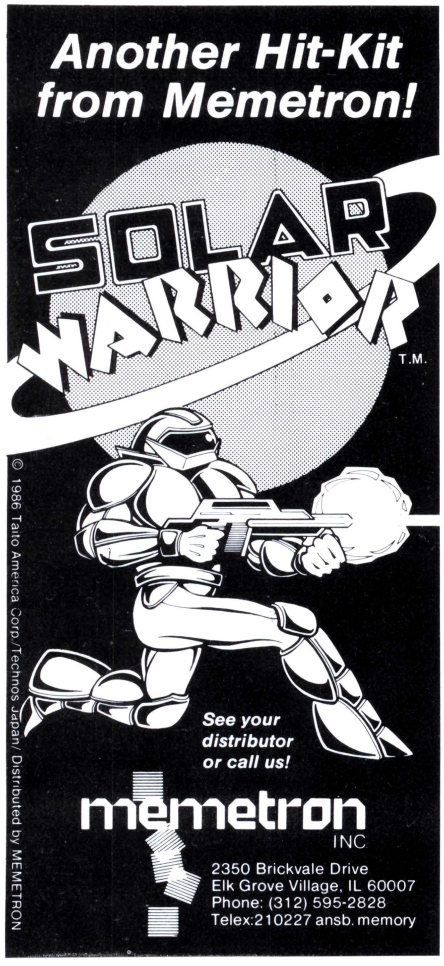
This industry is notorious for dropping everything when something new comes along. Right now that new thing is cranes. How does it affect companies making specialty equipment?

It goes back to "how quick can I get my money back?" One gentleman told me that he could take the money he would pay for my machine and buy a crane and get more money back sooner. But what you have to understand is that soon you will look in the back of the trade magazines and see "10 cranes for sale" "I have 20 cranes available" etc. I think they will be faddish. But that is how this industry is structured. There is built in obsolescence and people buy and make their money. Being in the vending industry is like being in the stock market. If you get into it too late you will lose. If you have the foresight to jump into it early you will be one of the winners.

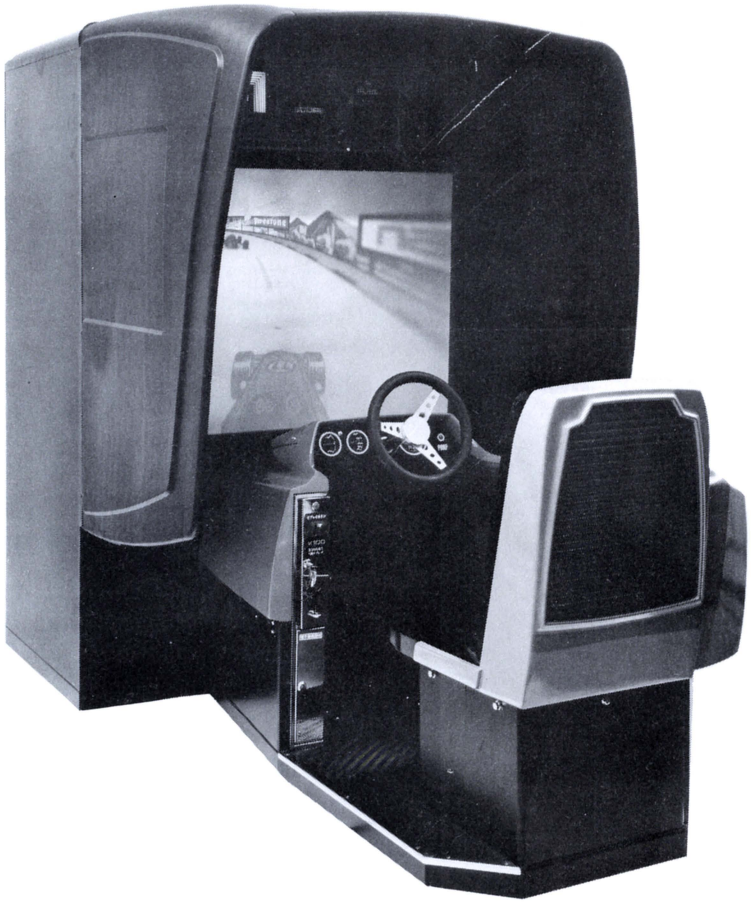
So it can be a problem for us. But I must go back to our logic that our machine will be here, and at the shows, we will doing our advertising, long after the cranes are gone. Operators will see the consistency here. Our sales will be up before the next new and exciting thing comes along. And when it comes, naturally our sales will be down again. But the point is that we will be here and those who have our equipment will be making money....consistently. I feel good about having a piece of equipment that is always going to be here, one that is loyal. Eventually we hope every operator has one for those specialty accounts.

Since your machine is custom made, how long does it take for delivery?

Operators need to look about 30 days ahead of time even on ordering machines. We're probably the American Shuffleboard of this type of unit; when you call them up and they say "yea, we'll ship you one out in eight weeks." Unfortunately, we are getting backed up but that's because every machine is custom made, even stained the color the operator wants.



TEN YEARS AGO



"THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO STIMULATE AND KEEP THIS BUSINESS FIELD GOING IS TO PREVENT COPYING...."

Ten years ago, Play Meter was beginning its third full year. Publisher Ralph Lally described the first two years of publishing as a time of "a new era of technology and enlightenment in the industry." Play Meter had began a series of service schools that turned out to be quite successful. Lally said, "Up until we began our first service school, we had no idea how thirsty technicians are for digital logic information."

Ten years ago, pool table owners could buy a Playmaster black light conversion kit to make balls and cloth glow under a black light. An ad described the item, "for locations that up until now you had to turn down because of bright light needed."

Other products making their appearance in Play Meter's New Product section were Ramtek's *Barricade, Gremlin's Blockade* and *Bazooka* and *Ric-O-Chet Stick Hockey* by Project Support Engineering, *Target Alpha* by Gottlieb, *Championship VI* soccer table by Mirco, *Bigfoot Bonkers* by Meadows Games, *Amazing Maze* by Midway and *Plinkers Canyon* by Sega.

Namco premiered its *F-1*, a driving simulator that projects actual three dimensional images on a giant race course.

In that same issue Play Meter interviewed Namco's Masaya Nakamura, the inventor of *F-1*. With amazing insight 10 years ago into problems the industry is facing today, Nakamura said, "The most important thing to stimulate and keep this business field going is to prevent copying. Otherwise you cannot have a sound industry...A copier just copies, he does not go through the risks or efforts that the original maker put in."

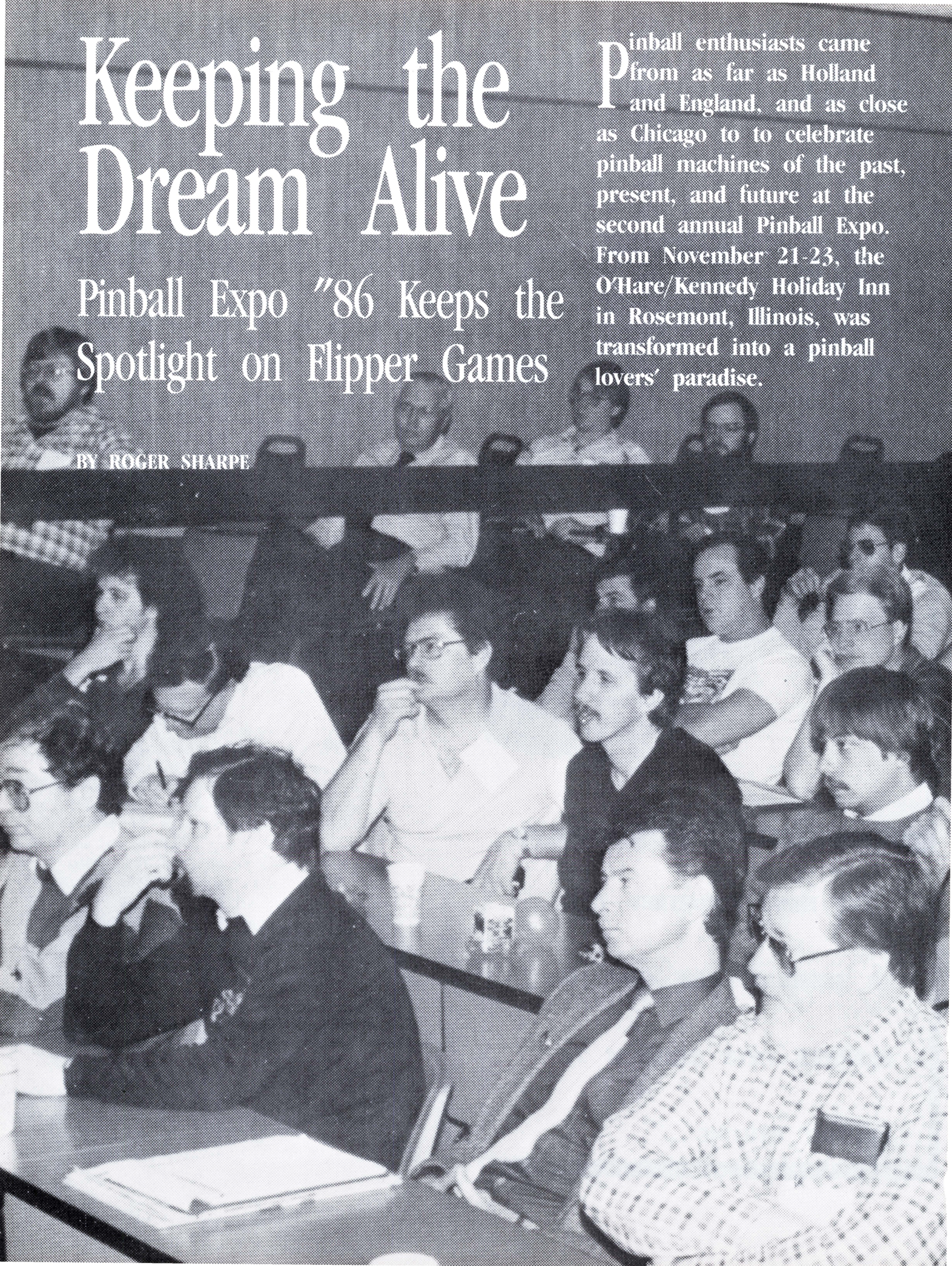
And ten years ago, Louis Nicastro, chairman of the board of Seeburg Industries announced the employment of Michael Stroll. As most know, Stroll went on to become president of Williams Electronics.

Keeping the Dream Alive

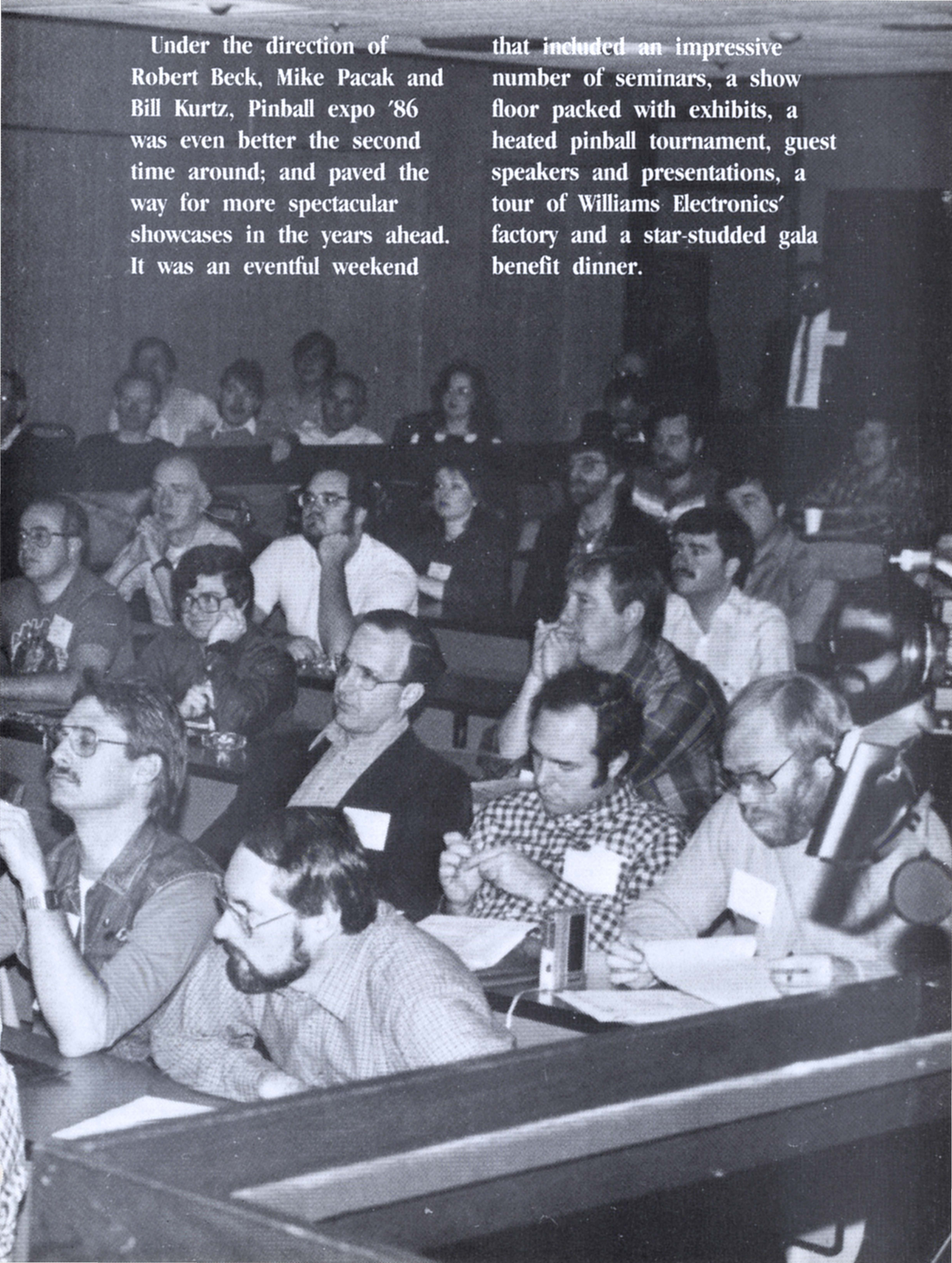
Pinball Expo "86 Keeps the Spotlight on Flipper Games

Pinball enthusiasts came from as far as Holland and England, and as close as Chicago to to celebrate pinball machines of the past, present, and future at the second annual Pinball Expo. From November 21-23, the O'Hare/Kennedy Holiday Inn in Rosemont, Illinois, was transformed into a pinball lovers' paradise.

BY ROGER SHARPE



Under the direction of Robert Beck, Mike Pacak and Bill Kurtz, Pinball expo '86 was even better the second time around; and paved the way for more spectacular showcases in the years ahead. It was an eventful weekend that included an impressive number of seminars, a show floor packed with exhibits, a heated pinball tournament, guest speakers and presentations, a tour of Williams Electronics' factory and a star-studded gala benefit dinner.



Norm Clark is shown paying tribute to long time friend Steve Kordek, while Rob Berke applauds both men.

Although the first impression might well be that Pinball Expo is only a collectors' show and flea market; this convention gave industry members a rare opportunity to interact with their target audience--the players--and better understand their needs and thinking regarding pinball production.

Interacting with players is an important element lacking at many other industry get-togethers. Many of the booths contained older equipment and assorted memorabilia, but there was a display by Premier spotlighting *Gold Wings* and *Genesis*; Bally/Midway showed off its latest, *Strange Science*, along with *Special Forces* and *Motordrome*; while Williams showed *Road Kings* and a line-up of *Pin-Bots* for the tournament portion of the weekend.

But what was most interesting about the Pinball Expo was the incredible 'underground' which exists, networking the enthusiasts together. The literature they have created is impressive, not only for its quality and content, but also the amount.

"The Coin Slot" is a perfect-bound, substantial quarterly publication filled with advertising and solid editorial of interest to collectors and other coin-op machine fans. At $28 per year, it's a bargain for the information and insights it provides via the direction of Donald Hoflin (Hoflin Publishing Ltd.,4401 Zephyr Street, Wheat Ridge, Colorado 80033-3299, (303) 420-2222). Another excellent source of information and some lengthy want-ad space is "The Pinball Trader" which bills itself as the "largest circulation of any bi-monthly pinball newsletter in the world' (published by Dennis Dodel, 9009 Manchester Road, St. Louis, MO 63144).

Salveson's "Coin Machine Trader", is reminiscent of Bill Gersh's old "Marketplace" with plenty of advertisement, information and other news for only $18 per year (published monthly by Ted Salveson, P.O. Box 602, Huron, South Dakota 57350, (605) 352-3870). And, as most in the industry know, pinball has an ardent following in Europe as well. To fill the need of getting news, there's "Pinball Player" incorporating "Penny Slot" supplement & "Jukin' Around.". A subscription to this exceptional publication is only $30 per year (Pinball Owners Association, chaired by Gary Flowers, Arcadia, 465 Cranbrook Road, Ilford, Essex IG2 6EW, England, Tel: 01-518-1047).

The network for pinball enthusiasts is pervasive, as evidenced by the number of quality publications available and those individuals who are keeping the heritage of the art form alive. Many visitors to the Expo were armed with their own listings of machines, backglasses, pinball flyers/brochures and other memorabilia that surprised most of the coin-op industry members who attended. And the Expo pointed out, emphatically, this zeal and support of pinball in a number of ways.

The Expo was a time to exchange ideas, views and information about the industry with loyal, knowledgeable individuals who seem to live, eat, and breathe pinball. To the credit of Rob Berke and his associates, their hard work paid off, especially for industry members. The full slate of speakers and seminars provided an entertaining forum for two days, with all attendees listening intently and raising some solid questions and comments.

Don Hooker, formerly with Bally, spoke about Bingo machines. He was followed by the legendary Harvey Heiss who wowed the crowd with his stories and recollections of coin-op in the early days when from 1928 to 1954 he was a designer at Genco. Steve Young and Gordon Hasse, Jr. spoke about the exactitude of pinball restoration. Then it was on to a panel discussion of pinball art lead by Paul Faris and Dave Christensen, who, together, produced some of the most memorable graphics of Bally pinballs in the '70s and '80s.

The Expo then moved out from the convention center and over to Williams Electronics which graciously

Wayne Neyens, Alvin Gottlieb, Stan Harris and Adolph Seitz, Jr.talked on past, present, and future of pinball.

A rogue's gallery of pinball designers who have helped shape the industry.

opened its doors for a full-scale tour of the factory on North California Avenue. After this special visit, the show continued with a pinball designer's discussion lead by Barry Oursler of Williams Electronics, Jim Patla of Bally/Midway and John Trudeau of Premier.

By this time, it was already early evening and time for the exhibit hall to open. It was great to see some old friends on the floor--*Central Park* from Gottlieb; *Challenger*, Gottlieb's ill-fated head-to-head two-player pinball machine; Williams' *Varkon*, the upright-in-a-video-cabinet pinball machine; Stern's *Lunarscape Orbitor 1*, and so many other golden oldies. There were even some surprises, such as the relatively unknown *Krull* from Mylstar and *Goin' Nuts* from Gottlieb with an interesting variation on the theme of multi-ball play: timed play and automatic ball entry on the playfield.

There was a special pinball on display, which garnered a great deal of attention despite the impressive Bally, Premier and Williams exhibit of new equipment. Dan Kramer, who engineered the trakball controller from Atari's consumer electronics division, had flown in a working prototype of a pinball called *Neutron Star* that offered some intriguing playfield features and programming touches. It is this kind of dedication for pinball that probably can't be duplicated with any other coin-op entertainment form.

On Saturday morning the seminar program started again, led off by yours truly, who was called on by Rob Berke to address the assembled masses and speak about my pinball book and the industry. Fortunately, not being a comfortable public speaker, Dick Bueschel and Alvin Gottlieb sat with me on stage for moral support as I, somehow, managed to run long during my question and answer session.

Adolph Seitz, Jr. carries on a technical seminar.

PLAY METER ASKS:

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF THE INDUSTRY?

"I feel the amusement games are making more money and they will continue to pick up over the next few years."

ILLINOIS

"With the affects of the boom and bust gone, the industry is back to a stable slow growth period in which with proper management techniques the operator can achieve good levels of profitability."

INDIANA

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Following me to the podium was something of a cult hero and singular member of the pinball underground, Richard Bueschel. Author, collector and wonderful orator/presentor, Dick gave an eye-opening show of pinball promotional trends, via flyers and brochures, over the years. Adolph Seitz, Jr. of Premier Technology was next and with the help of a *Genesis* pin game, Adolph gave an in depth and enlightening service school on the new tech improvements for diagnostics and some general maintenance tips.

Dennis Dodel brought the old favorites to the show floor.

The next, and final panel discussion, was a fitting reminder of just how far the industry has come over the years, but was also a tribute to the staying power necessary for success in the business. Alvin Gottlieb, Wayne Neyens, former Gottlieb pinball game designer, Adolph Seitz, Jr. and the renown Stan Harris of Philadelphia, spoke of the past, present, and future in a highly informative and entertaining segment.

The afternoon's festivities were highlighted by flip Out '86, an exciting pinball tournament played on Williams Electronics' new *Pin-Bot*. The top eight scorers qualified for the final playoff which was staged later in the evening during a memorable banquet. The tournament and a new *Pin-Bot* (donated by Williams) was won by Steve Engel. Michael Gottlieb (Alvin's son) just fell short of winning the pinball.

However, the real excitement of the evening was reserved for a special toast and roast to Steve Kordek, honoring his 50 years in the industry and his endless stream of accomplishments. Family, friends and business associations paid special tribute to this remarkable individual who has done so much, for so many and for so long.

As a forum and showcase of products and people, the Pinball Expo deserves the industry's support and care to keep it going on an annual basis. It was a superb show with much to experience and savor and this writer, for one, will be back again.

Rob Berke and Play Meter's Roger Sharpe.

Steve Kordek (left) with Pinball Expo coordinator, Rob Berke.

PLAY METER ASKS:

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF THE INDUSTRY?

"Very strong and expanding."

GEORGIA

"I think that it is definitely on the upswing. My collections are definetly on the rise. In my opinion almost all of the "Mom and Pop" operators have folded and this has had a beneficial effect on the image of the operator. When we take over locations from "Mom and Pop" operators the location owner is amazed at how professionalism has a significant effect on cashbox collections."

CALIFORNIA

"Getting better all the time!"

MINNESOTA

PLAYERS' PICKS

Premier's Gold Wings, another hit from Premier

BY STEVE HARRIS AND THE U.S. NATIONAL VIDEO GAME TEAM

Style is something that doesn't materialize overnight. Individual trademarks become popular only after they've been accepted by the playing public. And while not conforming with current standards or trends can have detrimental effects, taking gambles on consumer preferences can also result in the product developing a large following.

Since taking over from the coin-op patriarch D. Gottlieb & Company, Premier Technology has worked to develop a unique style enabling the company to stand above the competition. Premier took several gambles: It changed the industry's concept of backglass art with the introduction of the photographic backglass; and to accompany the visual appeal Premier designed games with high scoring incentives to keep players constantly challenged.

Players, of course, responded enthusiastically to the new Premier look. *Raven* and *Hollywood Heat* both capitalized on hot movie and television trends and attracted a lot of attention when released.

Gold Wings

And now, still riding high on the success of *Genesis*, Premier has debuted *Gold Wings*, a hot game that possesses all of the flair and excitement that is the Premier tradition.

Game Play

Borrowing from the hit summer movie, Top Gun, *Gold Wings* has a unique playfield design that duplicates the theme of the movie. For those who missed the film, Top Gun revolved around a hot shot navy pilot out to prove that he is the best. And Premier found it a superb plot for a pin game.

Like previous Premier efforts, the highest scores come from the largest multiplier bonus. The player begins by catapulting off the deck of an aircraft carrier and into a fierce dogfight. The player will first encounter the multiplier lanes which must be completed to advance up to a maximum of 15X.

Below the multiplier lanes lies a

GIMME 10 Twice!

That's all you need to say to bring the video bargain of the year to your location.

For the price of one dedicated game, you'll get Nintendo's PlayChoice-10™ System—complete with ten steady earning games in one narrow-body cabinet.

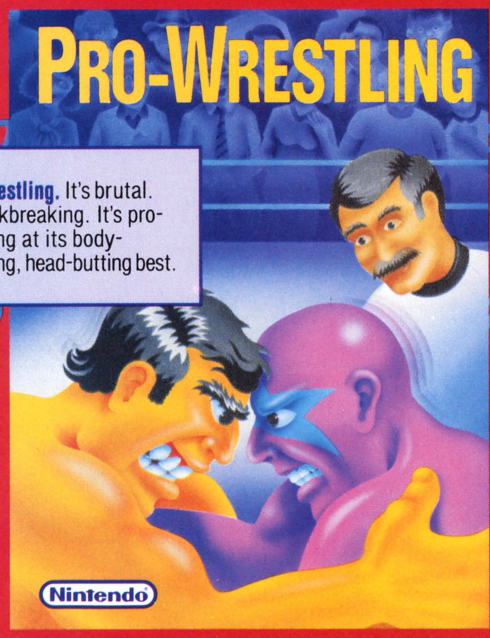
But that's only half of the bargain. For every system purchased before March 31, you'll also receive ten Gimme 10 Game Exchange coupons.

Use them throughout '87 to exchange your old software for new titles—many of them in first release on PlayChoice-10. All you pay is a $25 handling fee per game.

That means you can get up to ten new profit-making titles—a $2000 value—for only $250!

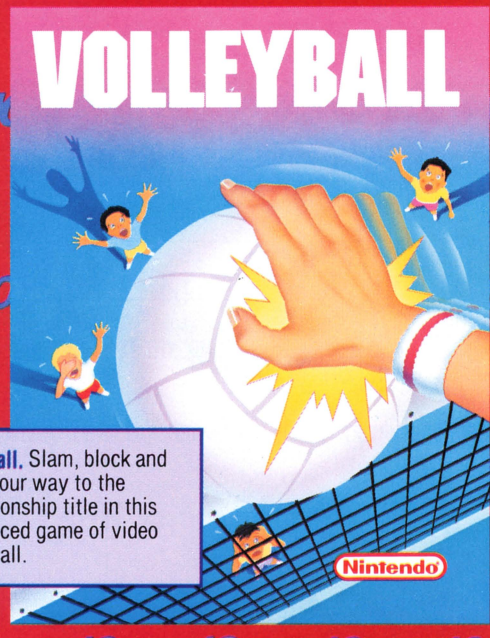
Make PlayChoice-10 your system for success. Just call your Authorized Nintendo Distributor and say, "Gimme 10 twice." Or call Nintendo of America Inc., (206) 882-2040, for referral.

Here's just four of what we have in store.



Pro-Wrestling. It's brutal. It's backbreaking. It's pro-wrestling at its body-slamming, head-butting best.

Gradius.™[1] Battle against galactic evil as you try to save the planet Gradius from the all-out attack of the Bacterions.



Volleyball. Slam, block and spike your way to the championship title in this fast-paced game of video volleyball.

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The Systems Company

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Nintendo of America Inc. P.O. Box 957, Redmond, WA 98052 (206) 882-2040

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Billboard TOP TEN

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HOT 100

	TITLE	ARTIST Label & Number/Distributing Label
1.	WALK LIKE AN EGYPTIAN	BANGLES COLUMBIA 38-06257
2.	NOTORIOUS	DURAN DURAN CAPITOL 5648
3.	SHAKE YOU DOWN	GREGORY ABBOTT COLUMBIA 38-06191
4.	EVERYBODY HAVE FUN TONIGHT	WANG CHUNG GEFFEN 7-28562/WARNER BROS.
5.	C'EST LA VIE	ROBBIE NEVIL MANHATTAN 50047/EMI-AMERICA
6.	CONTROL	JANET JACKSON A&M 2877
7.	THE WAY IT IS	BRUCE HORNSBY & THE RANGE RCA 5023
8.	WAR	BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND COLUMBIA 38-06432
9.	AT THIS MOMENT	BILLY VERA & THE BEATERS RHINO 74403
10.	IS THIS LOVE	SURVIVOR SCOTTI BROS. 4-06381/EPIC

COUNTRY

	TITLE	ARTIST Label & Number/Distributing Label
1.	THE TOUCH	ALABAMA RCA 5649-1-R
2.	STORMS OF LIFE	RANDY TRAVIS WARNER BROS. 1-25435 (8.98)
3.	WHAT AM I GONNA DO ABOUT YOU	REBA MCENTIRE MCA 5807
4.	LOVE'S GONNA GET YA	RICKY SKAGGS EPIC FE 40309
5.	GUITARS, CADILLACS, ETC.,ETC.	DWIGHT YOAKAM REPRISE 25372/WARNER BROS.(8.98.)
6.	#7	GEORGE STRAIT MCA 5750 (8.98)
7.	TOO MANY TIMES	EARL THOMAS CONLEY RCA 5619-1-R
8.	OUT GOIN' CATTIN'	SAWYER BROWN CAPITOL/CURB ST-12517/CAPITOL
9.	WINE COLORED ROSES	GEORGE JONES EPIC 40413
10.	MONTANA CAFE	HANK WILLIAMS, JR. WARNER/CURB 1-25412/WARNER BROS.(8.98)

ADULT CONTEMPORARY

	TITLE	ARTIST Label & Number/Distributing Label
1.	THIS IS THE TIME	BILLY JOEL COLUMBIA 38-06526
2.	STAY THE NIGHT	BENJAMIN ORR ELEKTRA 7-69506
3.	LOVE IS FOREVER	BILLY OCEAN JIVE 1-9540/ARISTA
4.	FALLING IN LOVE (UH-0H)	MIAMI SOUND MACHINE EPIC 34-06352
5.	SHAKE YOU DOWN	GREGORY ABBOTT COLUMBIA 38-06191
6.	SOMEWHERE OUT THERE (FROM "AM AMERICAN TAIL")	LINDA RONSTADT AND JAMES INGRAM MCA 52973
7.	THE WAY IT IS	BRUCE HORNSBY & THE RANGE RCA 5023
8.	WILL YOU STILL LOVE ME?	CHICAGO WARNER BROS. 7-28512
9.	CAUGHT UP IN THE RAPTURE	ANITA BAKER ELEKTRA 7-69511
10.	THE NEXT TIME I FALL	PETER CETERA WITH AMY GRANT WARNER BROS. 7-28597

DANCE DISCO

	TITLE	ARTIST Label & Number/Distributing Label
1.	MUSIQUE NON STOP	KRAFTWERK WARNER BROS. 0-20549
2.	CONTROL (REMIX)	JANET JACKKSON A&M SP-12209
3.	SOMEONE LIKE YOU	SYLVESTER MEGATONE/WARNER BROS. 0-20548/WARNER BROS.
4.	COME GO WITH ME	EXPOSE ARISTA AD1-9539
5.	BIZARRE LOVE TRIANGLE (REMIX)/STATE OF THE NATION (REMIX)	NEW ORDER QWEST 0-20546/WARNER BROS.
6.	I'M NOT PERFECT (BUT I'M PERFECT FOR YOU) (REMIX)	GRACE JONES MANHATTAN V-56038/CAPITOL
7.	MISUNDERSTANDING	JAMES (D TRAIN) WILLIAMS COLUMBIA 44-05967
8.	GOLDMINE (REMIX)/SEXUAL POWER	THE POINTER SISTERS RCA 5774-1-RD
9.	SHOWING OUT (GET FRESH AT THE WEEKEND)/SYSTEM	MEL & KIM ATLANTIC 0-86755
10.	ONCE IN A LIFETIME GROOVE (REMIX)	NEW EDITION MCA 23692

PLAY METER ASKS:

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF THE INDUSTRY?

"Good! The "get rich quick" people are out of it. Therefore the competition is more intelligent."

MICHIGAN

PLAY METER ASKS:

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF THE INDUSTRY?

"The current state of the industry is solid. We just had our best summer in three years and while school is slowing us down some, we eagerly await Christmas. We anticipate increases for at least the next year due to the effect of the Baby Boomer's Babies."

MISSISSIPPI

trio of thumper bumpers that divide the upper portion of the game into two sections. The left section features a skill shot loop that increases from 50,000 to a free ball as well as a capture hole. A drain from the upper left part of the playfield brings the ball into the jet wash area.

The main targets to the right of the playfield include the jet tube which carries the ball to the left side of the game. An additional lane on the far right releases captured balls and returns the action to the multiplier lanes.

The game is designed to afford the feel of a real aerial dogfight by placing tight loops at strategic points on the playfield. With one quick shot the player can send the ball in another direction at dizzying speeds.

Two sets of flippers and a special rescue option give players total freedom with ball control. Additional spot targets light extra ball and scoring features.

The playfield builds the theme of the game and, with appropriate lighting effects, brings the game to life with every shot. An airborne F-14 gets most of the attention, while missiles and after-burners add flash to the playfield.

The backglass art utilizes the same photographic technique as seen on previous Premiere efforts and although it's compelling, it is a bit bland. It does, however, help get the theme of the game across and attract attention.

The audio portion of *Gold Wings* really shines. A real siren and a military soundtrack keep pace with the action, building to a deafening crescendo when certain shots are performed.

You can't help but notice *Gold Wings*. It is different and refreshing, with straightforward play action that is supported by excellent audio accompaniment. It is a challenging addition to the already impressive lineup of machines that Premier has given us in the past.

APA Scoreboard

We are kicking off a new addition to the column: video game and pinball high scores. Now you can rate your players against the best in the world by comparing their scores with those listed on the Amusement Players Association's International Scoreboard. Players enjoy the thrill of competition, and with the APA International Scoreboard you'll be able to establish a more competitive spirit among your players.

For additional information on submitting video game and pinball high scores and promotional opportunities available from the APA, send a SASE to: P.O.Box 1558, Torrance, CA 90505. APA will be keeping the scoreboard up-to-date and would appreciate participation. This is only a partial list; APA keeps records on all video and pinball games.

Arkanoid	**812,180**
JACE CLARK	
Hermosa Beach, CA	
Ikari Warriors	**225,700**
BART JACOBY	
Atlanta, GA	
Night Stocker	**2,160,700**
GARY HATT	
Monrovia, CA	
Hollywood Heat	**27,819,360**
FRANK CAMPOBASSO	
Kansas City, MO	
Hang-On	**4L,715,030**
DON NOVAK	
Wichita, KS	

"Shove Penny" Shuffleboard

Kel-Chad Inc. has re-introduced its *Bank Shuffleboard* as *"Shove Penny" Shuffleboard.* The name change came, a company spokesman said, as a result of "trademark complications."

"Shove Penny" Shuffleboard involves a design that requires only 38 sq. ft. of play area. Kel-Chad's game has solid state electronics, a "no pay/no play" barrier, operator-adjustable game times and coin mechanisms, and fully illuminated digital scorekeeping.

For more information, write Kel-Chad Inc., 990 Lutter Drive, Crystal Lake, IL 60014, or call (815) 455-7200.

Solar Warrior

Memetron, Inc., has debuted *Solar Warrior*, a horizontal conversion kit that features a fast-pace space-themed game. Accommodating one or two players, *Solar Warrior* can be configured in a cocktail table.

Memetron, who holds exclusive rights from Taito America, will begin shipping in mid-January 1987.

For more information, write Memetron, Inc., 2350 Brickvale Drive, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007, or call (312) 595-2828.

Super 6

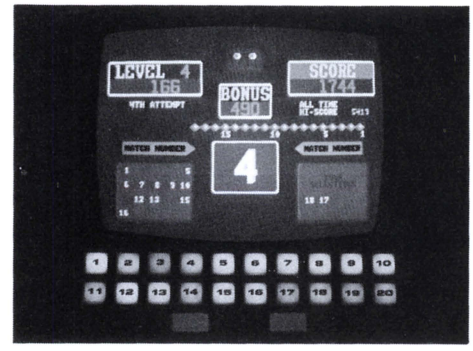
Arachnid, Inc., has introduced the *Super 6*, its newest generation of English Mark Darts based on its model 6000.

The game's 9-inch video monitor replaces an LED and allows for more elaborate scorekeeping. Cricket and Baseball, two popular games devised in the United States more than 35 years ago, have been added. Other choices include 25-cent games of 301, Count-Up, and Cut-Throat and 50-cent games of 501 Team Doubles Open In/Open Out, 701 Open In/ Open Out, 301 Double In/ Double Out. Cricket and Baseball are 50-cent games.

The *Super 6* has front-door servicing that allows removal of the main board, power supply, and monitor as a unit. A secondary video output plug-in enables simultaneous display of the game monitor on an external TV.

The target head uses the same segments, spider, and switch matrix that are used on Arachnid's models 4500 and 5000. The *Super 6* has a test mode that takes the game through each function and allows for a target-head test. At the end of the test mode, a popularity report lists the numbers for each game selection and displays a coin counter.

For more information, write Arachnid, Inc., P.O. Box 2901, Rockford, IL 61132-2901, or call (815) 654-0212.



Match 'em Up, Mad Adder, Bull Buster

Merit has introduced *Match 'em Up*, a one- or two-player game in which players race against time to find and uncover hidden matching symbols. The game, which has a number of different board shapes, has a buy-in feature that allows players to keep going from any level. Each game has two rounds, and players can complete a round and win another, up to 99 levels. A game of strategy, *Match 'em Up* also has

bonuses and mystery matches, "sneak-peeks," double scores, and black-out rounds.

Mad tests the player's skill at selecting a flashing number and hitting a combination of lit buttons that add up to that number. If the player can't match the number, he can reject it and select a new one. The play is timed, and the object is to clear all the lit buttons before time runs out. Each game has two rounds, and each level is faster than the one before it. *Match 'em Up* has a buy-in feature and full bookkeeping functions to monitor location play stats.

Merit has re-designed the cabinet for its *Bull Buster* dart game. The new cabinet is an all-formica cabinet that features complete front access to boards, bulbs, and displays; has a fully metered, large cash box; and is equipped with a bright, well-lit, non-glare target.

The *Bull Buster* has scoring for 301, 301 Masters, 301 Double In/Double Out, High Score, Baseball, Shanghai, 501, and 501 Masters.

For more information, write Merit Industries, Inc., 2525 State Road, Bensalem, PA 19020, or call (215) 639-4700.

Firetrap, Last Mission

Data East presents *Firetrap*, a game in which the player uses two 4-way joysticks to climb a burning building and put out the fire with a portable water cannon. The task isn't so easy, though, because he also has to rescue the people trapped in the building, all the while avoiding falling objects.

In *Last Mission*, the player battles hostile forces that occupy his home galaxy. He has at his disposal a multitude of weapons that he must use strategically to conquer the enemy starbase. The game features both vertical and horizontal scrolling and 360-degree joystick firing action.

For more information, write Data East USA, Inc., 470 Needles Drive, San Jose, CA 95112, or call (408) 286-7074.

Joust 2

Williams' first in-house designed dedicated video game in three years, *Joust 2* is billed by its makers as "a sequel without equal." The game has 35 different screens, each elaborately constructed to build difficulty, challenge reflexes and skill, and maintain a high level of player interest.

A game of strategy, *Joust 2* features otherworldly characters that swoop out of Escher-like configurations and change into other creatures. Two can play, and the game has a buy-in feature.

For more information, write Williams Electronics Games, Inc., 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618, or call (312) 267-2240.

Redline Racer

Cinematronics has introduced *Redline* , a game that's sold as an upright for one or two players or as a 36-inch-high 4-player console. The game has 16 tracks to choose from, with high-speed banks, overpasses, pop-up barriers, moving ramps, hairpin turns, and oil slicks. Sound boards provide tires that squeal and engines that roar.

The 4-player model is 29 inches wide and 40 inches deep. It weighs 250 pounds and has a 25-inch screen.

For more information, write Cinematronics, Inc., 1841 Friendship Drive, El Cajon, CA 92020, or call (619) 562-7000.

Status System II

Status Game Corp. has developed a second generation one board system, the *Status System II* to produce more colorful, improved graphics and faster action play.

The system enables the company to program new types of amusement games. Any Status game, as well as any other countertop on the market, can be converted to the *System II.* On all conversions Status will supply the new board system as well as a button panel (to hold joystick or trackball) for any countertop or upright on the market.

Three original games are now available for the new system: *Sure Shot,* a pool game; *19th* Hole, a miniature golf game; and *Spectra,* a color strategy game.

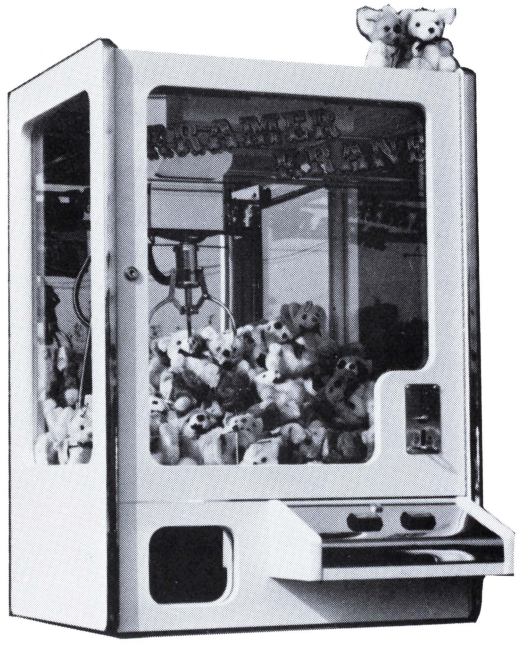
For more information, write Status Game Corp., 56 Budney Road, Newington, CT 06111, or call (203) 666-1960, or 800/835-7434.

Kramer Krane 2000

M. Kramer Manufacturing Co. introduces its newest crane models, the *Kramer Krane 2000* single upright and countertop.

Both units have six complete dip switch changeable play modes and 20 different settable music tunes during the play mode, plus complete flashing marquee header.

The units also have operator-controlled play time settings up to two minutes and variable play settings to give five plays for $1 or set play at 25 cents up to $5.



There is a complete six-month warranty on the upright and countertop and full credit LED display up to 99 credits. Both have operator-adjustable claws for different size prizes in addition to a coin-in meter and separate prize-out meter.

The upright has locking caster wheels, double coin mechanism, and ten inch extra-large prize baffle to hold more plush. Every one comes with a gumball dispenser ready for a quick update.

The countertop has a deluxe white cabinet with gold trim, a locking cash box that holds up to $750 and a three-inch lip for bar rail position. It measures 24 inches wide by 20 inches deep and 36 inches high.

For more details, write M. Kramer Manufacturing Co., Inc., 1100 Towbin Ave., Lakewood, NJ 08701, or call (201) 367-7810. Out of state call 800/631-2126.

Ninja Emaki

Nichibutsu U.S.A. tells the story of Ninja life and death according to Japanese legend with its newest vertical monitor value kit, *Ninja Emaki.*

The player becomes a brave young ninja who fights to save the royal princess from eternal madness. The two-headed snake Beguido has kidnapped her by order of the wicked master witch. Her capture gives the master witch the power to confine this world into darkness.

As the player shoots the war god statue, the Ninja scroll appears and provides him with eight magic weapons activated

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Everything's included except the stadium!

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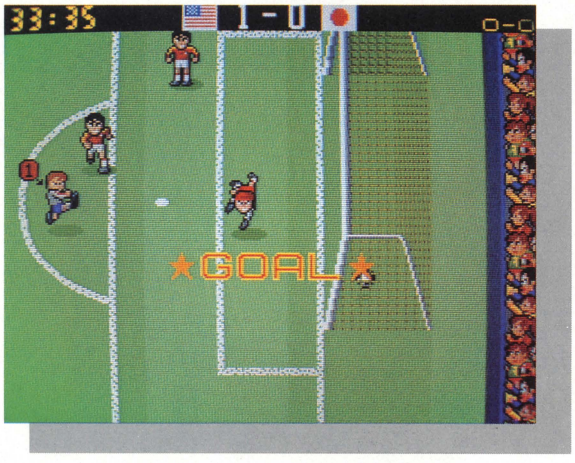

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CABINET DIMENSIONS:
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DEPTH: 40" (101.6 cm)

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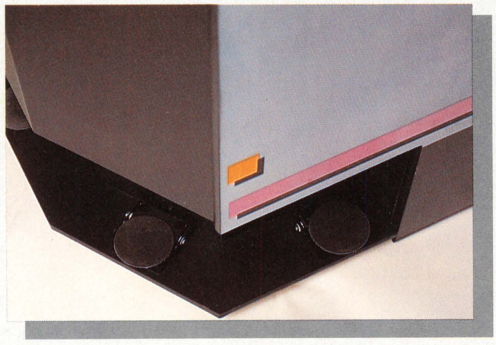

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by pushing the magic button. He can also use the fire button to attack demons with fireballs, and lightning arrows to battle enemy ninjas. Whirlwinds can kill the evil giant frog and tidal waves destroy giant green lobsters.

Other magic weapons include great cannons, magic smoke bombs, big star knives and two guardians to help the young Ninja. Mastering the weapons will prove helpful in the final battle with the horrible master witch. Beware of the great evils and many illusions of death.

Ninja Emaki has recently been very successful in Japan. See Nichibutsu's color insertion in this issue for more game details. For more information or distributor referral, write Nichibutsu U.S.A., Inc., 15737 Garfield Ave., Unit 18, Paramount, CA 90723, or call (213) 408-0515.

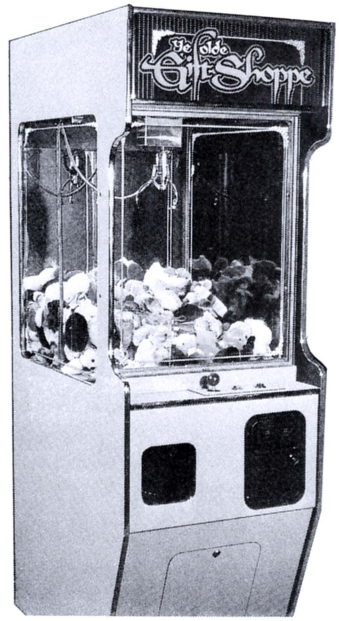
Golden 91, Sapphire 91

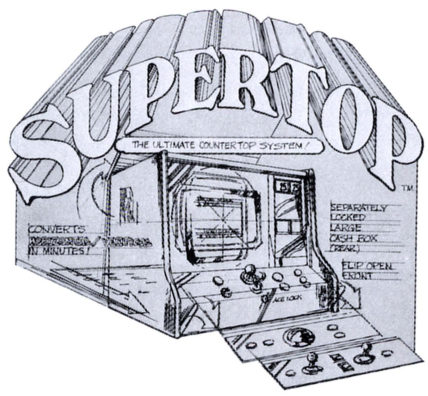
Rowe introduces the *Golden 91* and *Sapphire 91* phonographs, both offering 200 selections and bill acceptors for $1 and $5 bills.

The newly designed phonographs have no horizontal surfaces, thus preventing customers from placing food or drinks on the unit. The digital display has been redesigned to show record playing, your selection, and credit remaining.

Rear-lighted graphics and flashing lights pulse in time with the music. Other features include easy-to-read number strips, title rack and backlit price card, plus a raised title rack for easier viewing.

The *Golden 91* has Corinthian walnut woodgrain vinyl sides, beige and spice doors and gold anodized trim.





The *Sapphire 91* has black vinyl sides, blue doors and silver anodized trim.

A built-in trouble-shooting system and LED readouts provide easy diagnosis. Both feature all-front servicing and maintenance. Nine different options are available, from extension speakers to remote volume control and cancel assembly.

For more information, write Rowe International, Inc., 75 Troy Hills, Whippany, NJ 07981, or call (201) 887-0400.

Ye Olde Gift Shoppe

Altec Manufacturing, Inc. introduces *Ye Olde Gift Shoppe*, a single upright crane using a European claw unit. The remainder of the crane is made in the U.S.

Ye Olde Gift Shoppe has a double coin mechanism that handles up to four coins and adjustable timer for 20 to 60 seconds. It is available with a four-way joystick control only. The exterior of the crane is made of plexiglass.

The crane comes with a solid state electronic package and four tension adjustments to accommodate varying prize sizes. The newest units are available with dollar bill validator and gumball accessory that fits any crane on the market. Twelve musical tunes are used during the play mode.

For more information, write Altec Manufacturing, Inc., P.O. Box 20215, Reno, Nevada 89510, or call 800/4223-8779; also (702) 323-2900.

Super Top

Merit Industries introduces the ultimate countertop

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Merit has designed the new unit to convert both horizontal and vertical games in minutes. Just put in your game and control panel!

Super Top comes complete with 13-inch Wells-Gardner monitor, dual coin mechanism, universal power supply, isolation transformer, front plexi and bezel and Ace lock. There is a flip-open front and separately locked large cash box in the rear.

This addition to Merit's line of countertops also is available as a dedicated game with *Arkanoid* (by Taito/ Romstar), *Big Event Golf* (by Taito) and all Bally Sente Sac I games.

For more information, write Merit Industries, Inc., P.O. Box 5004, 2525 State Road, Bensalem, PA 19020, or call 800/523-2760, or in Pennsylvania (215) 639-4700.

Monte Carlo

Premier Technology has just released its newest game, *Monte Carlo*, that combines the excitement of roulette with the challenge of pinball.

Monte Carlo's photographic backglass is all glamour and glitz and highlights unique playfield features like a functional roulette wheel and a high stakes 10 million point ramp shot.

The game also has a stargate ramp, three-ball multi-ball and a player bet pool; plus four drop target banks.

For more details, write Premier Technology, 759 Industrial Drive, Bensenville, IL 60106, or call (312) 350-0400.

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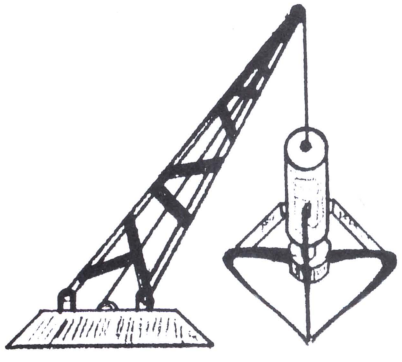

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Atlas welcomes customers to annual party

Atlas was host to over 400 customers and suppliers at its annual Christmas party at the Zum deutschen eck restaurant on December 12. "This is our way of telling our customers how much we appreciate having them as customers," said Atlas president Jerry Marcus.

Atlas customers mingled with manufacturers representatives and tried out the latest games. Tradewest showed its new *Victory Road*, the first time its been shown since the AMOA show a month before. Grand Products showed *Up Scope*, its latest video in the form of a periscope. It looks like the kind of fun players are looking for. Operators also got another look at the outstanding lineup of equipment introduced at AMOA.

As a special surprise, AMOA president Dick Hawkins and his wife Patti joined the festivities. Dick spoke to the group about the Wayne Hesch fund, a scholarship fund set up in memory of the late AMOA president. "This is something we can be proud of," he stressed. "I urge all operators to support the Wayne Hesch fund anyway they can."

Ed Pellegrini, Atlas executive vice president, and his brother Frank with Konami, introduced their mother, who looked absolutely marvelous and was a pleasure to talk with.

Over 400 guests enjoyed a superb German dinner at Zum Deutschen Eck.

Operators Mr. and Mrs. Elwyn Tatro of Tee-Pee Enterprises in Kankakee, Illinois.

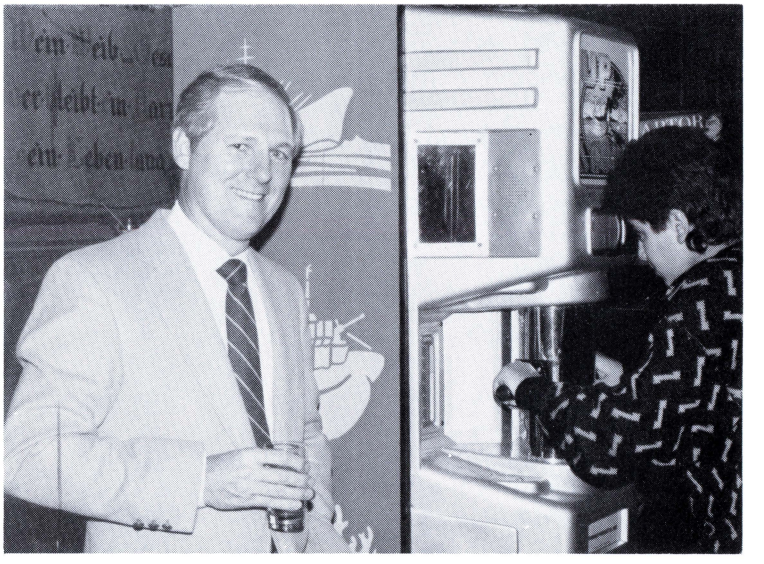
Kim Yaffa of Status shares this photo with Atlas' Michigan office branch manager Jim Laroux.

OPEN HOUSE

Tradewest's John Rowe stands in front of the company's latest hit video, Victory Road.

Ben Santucci of Merit chats with Konami's Frank Pellegrini.

AMOA president Dick Hawkins (left) with his wife Patti, Bill Cravens of Capcom, and Atlas president Jerry Marcus.



Dave Marofske of Grand Products watches a player work out her strategy on Up Scope.

OPEN HOUSE

Bally Southwest open house is a big success

After each AMOA expo, Bally Southwest of Phoenix, opens its offices and warehouse to customers to present the latest and greatest as introduced at the industry's annual trade show in Chicago. This year's event was held December 11 and drew over 250 guests, who pushed buttons, maneuvered joysticks and steering wheels, and pulled triggers on a superb line-up of new games. Thirteen manufacturers were there to present their new products, contests were staged, and prizes awarded. A lavish buffet "with an Italian touch!" was enjoyed by the guests.

As a distributor for a geographically large market, Bally Southwest places great value on this type of product showcase as a valuable marketing tool. "It offers one stop shopping," explained branch manager Sal DeBruno. "It gives manufacturers and operators a chance to express ideas and opinions, resolve technical issues, and share merchandising techniques."

As a 47-year veteran of the coin-op industry, DeBruno has had the opportunity to test all kinds of promotional techniques in this highly competitive marketplace. He sponsors about six open houses each year demonstrating his company's belief in new product introductions on a more personal level. "It eliminates the barriers that can build up and sometimes it can even get the operator into the design state of equipment," DeBruno said.

DeBruno described the day as "... very satisfying from both good will and financial standpoints. It was a good close for an already good year!"

Guests came from as far as Bolivia! Here, Juan and Carman Issa dig into the buffet.

Operators crowded around the latest machines.

Al Kress (center) with operators Vincent Marcello (left) and Chris Kanellakis with a friend.

Welcome to Baton Rouge!

Coin Machine Distributors South held an open house in its Baton Rouge facility on December 10, hosting a crowd of over 100 guests. Suppliers attending included Alice Morgan from AT&T Payphones, Ted Lloyd from Rowe and John Hill from Sega.

Company owner Al Kress, branch manager Jim Bloomer, and Jim's assistant Linda McDaniels greeted guests. The parts department was reportedly extra busy as operators took the opportunity to pick up parts.

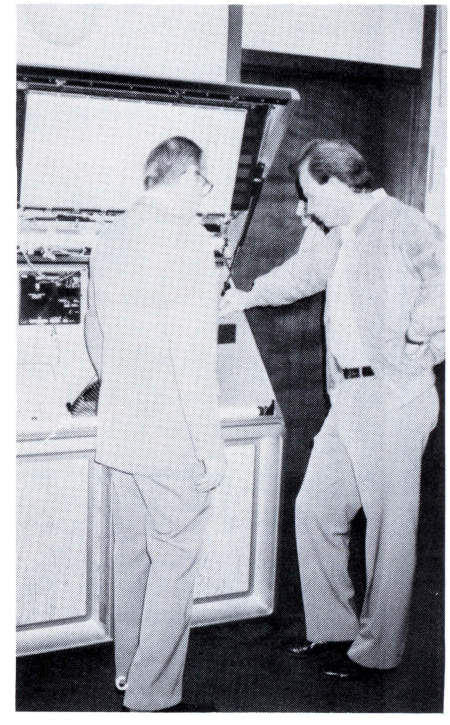
Bloomer noted the popularity of the Rowe CD/45 phonograph evidenced by Dynasty Amusements sending its top executives for a private talk with Rowe's Lloyd. Hill was kept busy showing off Sega's mega-hit, *Out Run*; and Bally's *Strange Science* got rave reviews from customers.

Prize winners included Andy Giaconi of Dreamland Amusement, Fred Boyd of Amite River Amusement, Mike Smith, Wayne Cubbage of Gonzales Amusement, and Nolan Estopinal of Chalmette Amusement.

Coin Machine Distributors represents Rowe music and vending, Sega, Bally Midway, Bally Sente, Merit, Valley, Vendo, Cinematronics, Exidy, Litton Ovens, National Locks.

(From left) Sega's John Hill, Al Kress, and branch manager Jim Bloomer.

Sega's John Hill shows an operator the finer points of playing *Out Run*.



Operator Vincent Marcello examines the insides of a Rowe phonograph while Ted Lloyd stands by to answer questions.

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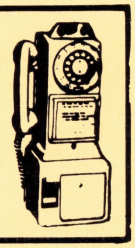

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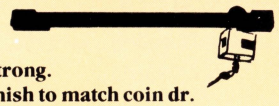

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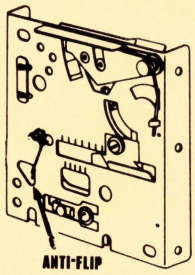

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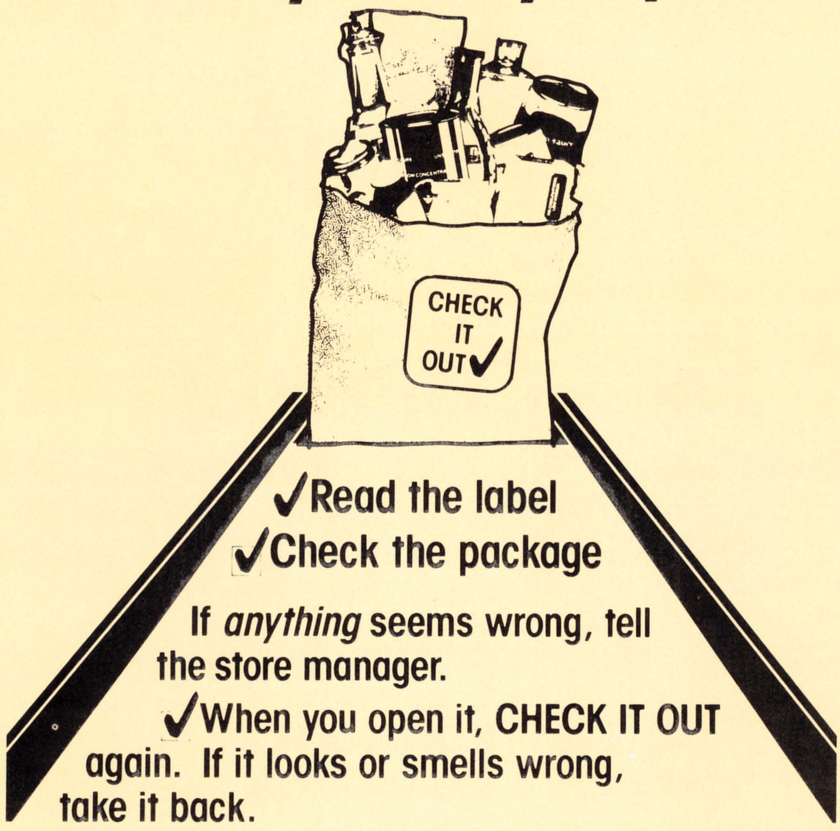

✓Read the label
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If *anything* seems wrong, tell the store manager.

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— A message from this magazine and the Food and Drug Administration

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1987 AUCTIONS 1987

U. S. AMUSEMENT AUCTION CO. proudly announces its 1987 Spring line-up of auctions. Please read this magazine each month for additional sales. If you are interested in any particular auction please call or write the Regional Manager of that area and we will send you a flyer. For consigning games please notify the appropriate manager 2-4 weeks before the auction.

NORTHERN REGIONAL MANAGER

Ric Stephan
2415 W. Amherst
Bloomington, IN 47401
812-332-0568

Indianapolis, IN
Springfield, IL
Columbus, OH

SOUTHERN REGIONAL MANAGER

John Kaufman
1627 Mellwood Ave.
Louisville, KY 40206
502-587-0810

Cincinnati area
Louisville, KY

FEBRUARY 21
Louisville, KY
(call or write John for location)

APRIL 4
Louisville, KY
(call or write John for location)

MAY 16
Columbus, OH
State Fairgrounds
DiSalle Arts & Crafts Bldg.
I-71 Exit 17th Ave.

FEBRUARY 28
Saturday 12:00 Noon
Indianapolis, IN
Farm Bureau Bldg.,
State Fairgrounds,
38th Street
PHONE: February 27-28 (317)-927-7556

APRIL 11
Indianapolis State Fairgrounds
(location same as February 28)

JUNE 6
Erlanger, KY
(location same as March 14)

MARCH 14
Erlanger, KY (south of Cincy.)
Best Western Airport Inn-Convention Center
I-75 Exit 184

APRIL 25
Springfield, IL
State Fairgrounds
Illinois Building
I-55 Exit 100

JUNE 13
Indianapolis, IN
(call or write Ric for location)

ALL SALES ARE ON SATURDAY AND START AT 12:00 NOON
Consignors please bring games in the day before the sale
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AUCTIONEER: Bill Hughes
ADVERTISING MANAGER: Ric Stephan

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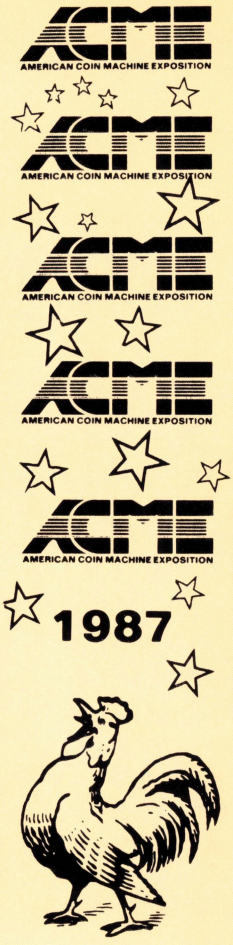

Independent Firm Offers Digital Service

John Ebert, who was the service manager of Digital Controls, has formed his own company and is already providing service to old Digital customers. Ebert's new company, Video Services, boasts a zippy 24-hour turnaround time. He also has a supply of miscellaneous parts for some of Digital Controls product.

Video Services October specials is LCI CPU board update with horse racing and slots for $150.

Video Services

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President

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Norcross, Georgia 30093 (404) 925-8337

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MARCH 20, 21, 22
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Is AMOA Losing Its Overseas Support?

BY DAVID SNOOK

There was a time in the heady video days when we at Coin Slot (the British coin machine journal) used to bring 120 operators to the AMOA show in Chicago. In 1986 we brought just 20. A sign of the times? I doubt it, judging from the general ebullience at the Hyatt Regency, and the general upswing in Europe. It's not a lack of currency at fault.

Then we noticed that the AMOA official attendance figures, with comparisons with 1985, were as follows:

	1985	1986
TOTAL ATTENDANCE	7,100	6,802
OPERATORS	3,147	3,996
EXHIBITORS & PERSONNEL	3,697	2,619
OVERSEAS	226	62

The obvious reaction is that the operator increase is very healthy and is what might have been expected, bearing in mind the improvement in operating conditions. In short, they've paid the bills from the video lunacy of 1981 and 1982, and can afford to invest once more. That is further backed by the pronounced increase in the number of dedicated cabinet games at the show.

The statistics on exhibitors and their personnel is not surprising either. Exhibitors, after a couple of very lean years, have decided that each additional staff member at the exhibition adds to overheads, transportation, hotels, wining and dining. If they can manage with 1,000 less among them, then it makes sense for them to do so. And I certainly never considered any short comings in exhibitor service at the exhibition which would be the natural result of inadequate staffing.

And that brings us to the foreign participation, which represents a substantial 73 percent drop from last year's total.

AMOA sends out press releases to the international trade press but never, to my knowledge, advertises in any of the dozen or so coin machine specialist publications in the UK, France, Spain, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, and Japan. The AMOA offers excellent facilities for the staff of those publications when at the show, but does not actively sell itself to the international market.

Every year I hear criticisms from overseas visitors who have to pay an astounding $100 to get into the exhibition. That compares unfavorably with the $7 that American visitors pay to see three days of the world's leading coin machine show, the Amusement Trades Exhibition International, in London in January.

It seems that the original thinking behind AMOA's high entrance fee was that non-members should be penalized. So they said, "why not penalize them to the extent that the entrance fee is as close to the AMOA membership fee as possible to prompt operators to join?" But should AMOA be asking an operator from Colombia, India or Botswana to pay an entrance fee equivalent to an AMOA membership? What can be possibly gained by those operators joining AMOA?

In short, the foreign operators are being penalized unfairly. AMOA might well argue that if someone is prepared to spend hundreds of dollars flying overseas for the show, they are not going to object to a $100 entrance fee to the point where they'll stay away. It doesn't sound logical, but when added to the AMOA's strangely lackadaisical attitudes towards overseas business, one is tempted to believe it must have some effect as evidenced by the drop in overseas attendance. The same people can get into other leading international shows for a fraction of the price. No one, after all, likes being ripped off, no matter what the sum involved.

Perhaps AMOA doesn't want its show to be international. Perhaps it is a deliberate isolationist policy. If that's the case then the organization is doing a distinct disservice to its exhibitors. They need--and the U.S. Treasury needs--as many pounds, deutschmarks, francs and yen as it can get.

Perhaps they should think again.

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